# THE PHILOSOPHY OF VIS'ISTĀDVAITA

#### BY

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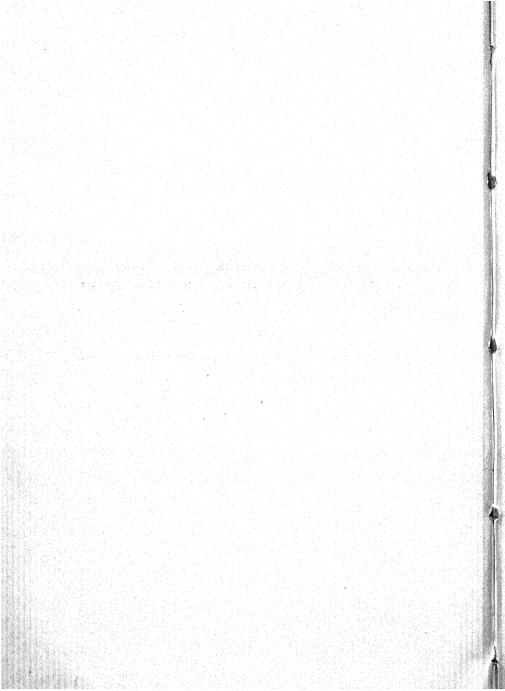
## DEDICATED TO SREE MAHARAJAH RAO VENKATA KUMARA MAHIPATHI SURYA RAU BAHADUR, D.Litt.,

Maharajah of Pithapuram

AS A TOKEN OF THE AUTHOR'S GRATITUDE FOR HIS

PATRONAGE AND DEEP INTEREST IN

VIS'ISTĀDVAITA



#### PREFACE

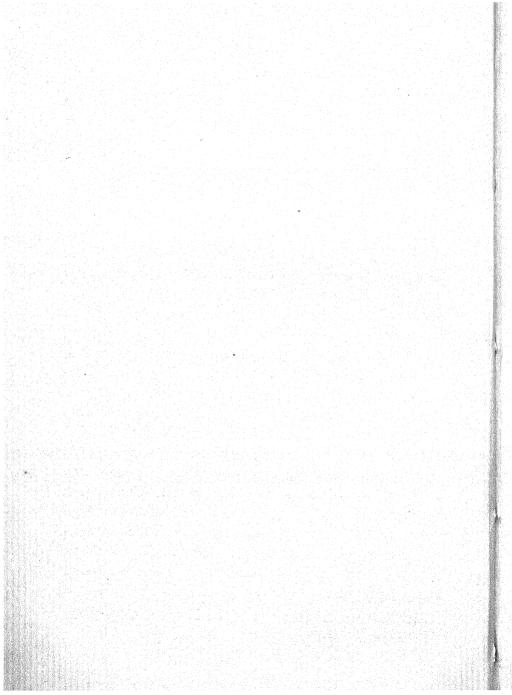
THE main purpose of this work is to give a critical and comprehensive exposition of the central features of the philosophy of Visistadvaita and its relation to other schools of Vedanta. Visistadvaita is not as widely known as Advaita among students of Philosophy. It has also suffered at the hands of its few expositors who use the misleading term 'qualified monism' as its English equivalent and who in their interpretations identify it with the Bhedabheda system of Vedanta and Hegelian thought. With a view to do justice to Visistadvaita and set the balance right so far as influence on modern thought is concerned, I published in 1928 Ramanuja's Idea of the Finite Self in a very concise form. My later work, The Philosophy of Bhedabheda, published in 1934, was designed to serve as an exhaustive introduction to the study of Ramanuja and the development of his system in the history of Indian Philosophy. The present work is a comprehensive but modest survey of the system of Visistadvaita as outlined in a series of eight lectures delivered by me under the auspices of the University of Madras. The delay in its publication was largely due to the preoccupations of administrative work.

Visistadvaita maintains its position in the history of Indian thought by establishing its own siddhanta by a criticism of rival systems. It has, at the same time, a synthetic insight into the essentials of other dars'anas and accepts whatever in them is consistent with its own basic principles. It is a true philosophy of religion which reconciles the opposition between philosophy and religion and the conflict between monism and pluralism. If it is liberally interpreted in terms of contemporary philosophy and comparative religion without in any way sacrificing its foundational principles, it is capable of satisfying the demands of science and philosophy on the one hand, and of ethics and religion on the other; and an attempt is made in the following pages to give such an interpretation.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to all those who have helped me in the preparation of this book. I had the rare privilege of sitting at the feet of the late Mahāmahōpādhyāya Kapistalam Des'ikācāriar Svāmi, and being instructed by him in the essentials of the Vis'iṣṭādvaita Dars'ana. My thanks are due to my teacher, Sri S. Vasudevachariar, who warmly encouraged me in this venture by reading the type-script and offering valuable suggestions; to my esteemed friend, Professor M. Hiriyanna for the great care with which he went through the MS. and for important and friendly counsel; to Dewan Bahadur V. K. Ramanujachariar, who, in spite of the infirmities of old age, read portions of the type-script and commended this 'labour of love' and to Rao Bahadur K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar who

also read portions of the work and helped to secure its early publication. I record my gratitude to my friends, Rao Saheb M. R. Rajagopala Aiyangar, Sri G. K. Rangaswami Aiyangar and Sri K. R. Sarma for their continued and enthusiastic assistance in reading through the proofs and in the citation of authorities; I am also beholden to Dr. R. Nagaraja Sarma who willingly read portions and offered valuable criticism and to Sri D. Ramaswami Aiyangar for similar help on some of the concluding chapters. My thanks are due to Sri P. Sankaranarayanan and to Dr. T. R. Chintamani for kindly preparing the Index and the Errata respectively. I take this opportunity of acknowledging my obligations to the Madras University for the kind permission to utilise my lectures on Ramanuja in the preparation of this work. Dr. G. Srinivasa Murti, the Honorary Director of the Adyar Library, has placed me under heavy obligation by publishing the work in the Adyar Library Series; I thank Dr. C. Kunhan Raja for his kind support; I also thank Sri A. N. Krishna Aiyangar for his hearty co-operation and supplying all the necessary aids in the successful completion of the work. The elegant and expeditious printing of the Vasanta Press in these difficult times is mainly due to its enthusiastic Superintendent, Sri C. Subbarayudu. Sri P. T. Sriniyasa Aiyangar and Sri R. C. Srinivasa Raghavan prepared the typed press copy and went through the proofs.

Sri Krishna Library, Mylapore, 30th April 1943 P. N. Srinivasachari



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## THE PHILOSOPHY OF VIS'IŞTĀDVAITA

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universality summed up in the twin truths of the *brahmanisation* of the *ātman* and service to humanity; its spiritual hospitality.

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## INTRODUCTION

HE Philosophy of Vedānta is enshrined in the Upanişads, the Gītā and the Brahma Sūtras, which together constitute its foundation and supreme authority. Its truths are true for ever and impersonal, and do not depend on the personality of a historic founder. The impersonal is embodied in the experience of seers, prophets and philosophers, who only discover the truth and do not create it de novo. The Upanișads contain the wisdom of Vedānta; the Gītā gives its cream; and the Sūtras expound its philosophic value. The fundamental problem of Vedanta is: "What is that by knowing which everything else is known?" and its solution is that by realising Brahman everything is realised. The solution is not merely metaphysically satisfactory, but also spiritually satisfying. When finite consciousness is purified and exalted, it can break through the confines of finiteness, intuit the Infinite or Brahman, and thus realise the supreme goal of experience. By an immanent criticism of the categories of experience and by spiritual induction, it is possible for the metaphysician as a mumuksu to renounce the ephemeral values of worldliness and reach his eternal home in the absolute. He then becomes a wise man or vidvān, and, with his philosophic illumination and moral exaltation, he becomes a pattern of perfection, and works for world welfare. Vedanta is thus the highest exposition of Indian philosophy in its

theoretical and practical aspects, and there is nothing good? and true in the world more elevating and beneficial than *Vedāntic* thought and life. It is therefore essential for a seeker after truth and eternal happiness to know and appreciate the meaning and value of *Vedānta*, the most precious gift of India to mankind.

The Vedānta Sūtras of Bādarāyaņa, identified with Vyāsa, are, by common consent, regarded as the most authoritative and systematic exposition of the Upanisads and recognised as the best manual of Vedānta. On a superficial view, the *Upanisads* appear to be conflicting and self-contradictory without any trace of logical consistency. But the Sūtrakāra, with his genius for synoptic knowledge, affirms the continuity and unity of all the texts 1, and the Sūtras string together the teachings of the *Upanisads* and present them as a systematic whole. The Sūtra is cryptic or laconic, and is defined as a clear, concise and comprehensive aphorism that should be faultless and free from repetition. The method of employing connected catchwords to arrive at systematic unity is planned and perfected in the Brahma Sūtras. It is unrivalled for its metaphysical profundity and spiritual power. From the first Sūtra to the last, the arguments develop rhythmically step by step until the whole scheme is completed. The parts are soorganically related with one another and with the whole, that,. if a part is destroyed, the symmetry of the whole will also be destroyed. The central idea that pervades the constituent elements is the truth that Brahman is absolutely real and spiritually realisable. The aphorist is also a supreme artist and by the method of samanvaya, he reconciles the apparently conflicting Upanisads, and harmonises them into a coherent

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Brahma Sūtras, III. iii. 1.

whole. The dominant motive of the Sūtrakāra is to combine philosophic speculation with spirituality and communicate the wisdom so gained to aspiring humanity. The Sūtras in their exposition start with the aspiration of the philosopher or mumukṣu for Brahmajñāna and end with the attainment by the mukta of Brahmānubhava.

The Vedānta Sūtras consist of four chapters divided into. sixteen sections or badas, each of which is sub-divided into adhikaranas or topics of Vedāntic interest. While, according to S'ankara, there are 555 aphorisms, and according to Pūrnaprajña, 564. Rāmānuja counts only 545. The first chapter expounds the nature of Brahman as the ultimate ground of the universe of acit, and cit, in the light of the kārana-vākvas of the Upanisads dealing with the cause or ground of the The second chapter called the Avirodhadhyaya universe establishes the same truth negatively by refuting and rejecting non-Vedāntic theories. The third chapter deals exhaustively with the sādhanas or means of attaining Brahman in accordance with the Vedāntic truth that the metaphysical ground of all beings is the goal of religious meditation. The last chapter known as the Phaladhyaya brings to light the nature of mukti as. the fruition of the whole philosophical enquiry. The end and aim of the whole system is summed up in the first four Sūtras called the Catussutri. They assert that Brahman is the subject of enquiry in its philosophical and spiritual aspect and the supreme end of experience. The first Sūtra states that the ultimate question of philosophy which is also the quest of religion is the knowledge of Brahman, and thus identifies. the metaphysician with the mumuksu. The second Sūtra solves the supreme problem of ontology by declaring that the supreme-

an Indiana kun munikanan mengana

kāraņantu dhyeyaḥ.

Reality of the universe is Brahman and that it is the One without a second. The third insists on the sastra as the supreme source of this knowledge on the ground that spiritual wisdom is the criterion and crown of all experience, and that it can only be spiritually discerned. Dialectics leads to endless disputations and ultimate doubts and cannot solve the quest of the mumukşu which is supra-sensuous and supra-rational. The fourth Sūtra, tat tu samanvayāt, establishes the comprehensive truth of Vedānta that the philosophic knowledge of Brahman also satisfies the spiritual quest and imparts the eternal bliss of Brahmānanda to the mukta. The true philosopher is thus a synoptic thinker and spiritual seer, who, by knowing Brahman, realises everything else, and communicates his wisdom to others.

The Upanisads, the Gītā and the Sūtras teach the same Vedāntic truth in its mystical, moral and metaphysical aspects respectively, in spite of their apparent self-contradictions and diversities of interpretation. The reference in the Sūtras to different ancient ācāryas like Āsmarathya, Audulomi Kāsakṛtsna, Bādari and Jaimini is sufficient internal evidence to prove the prevalence, from very ancient times, of a variety of Vedāntic schools, each claiming to be the true representative of the teaching of the Upanisads. All the Vedantic teachers expound the Sūtras in a coherent way, though they represent different types of philosophy. They claim the authority of immemorial tradition for their siddhanta and satisfy the triple tests of sastraic support, philosophical stability and intuitive certainty (or sruti, yukti and anubhava). All the Vedāntic schools generally agree in the refutation of non-Vedantic schools and the establishment of the truth that the supreme endeavour and end of man is Brahmajñāna or the

realisation of Brahman. But they differ in the exact determination of the nature of Brahman and the means and value of attaining Him. Among the chief exponents of the Sūtras are the well-known ācārvas, Sankara, Bhāskara, Yādava, Nimbārka, Rāmānuja, S'rikantha, Madhya, Vallabha and Baladeva. S'ankara's Advaita, claiming to follow the teaching of Bādari, is the oldest of the extant expositions of the Sūtras. The Bhedābheda schools of Bhāskara and Yādava are midway, logically and chronologically, between S'ankara and Ramanuja, and may be said to follow the tradition of Audulomi and Asmarathya. The bhāsya of Yādava is not now available, though there are references to it in the works of Rāmānuja and Vedānta Desika. The Nimbarka school of Dvaitadvaita marks the logical transition from the Bhedābheda of Yādava to the Visistādvaita of Rāmānuja. The system of Vijnāna Bhiksu also rejects Māvāvāda and the theory of aikya. The exposition of S'rīkantha, in its purely metaphysical aspect, is not very different from the system of Rāmānuja, though the siddhāntas and sambradāyas are different. The Dvaitadarsana of Madhvācārya brings out the philosophic theism of Vedānta in its Vaisnava aspect and the Acintva Bhedabheda of Caitanva and the S'uddhādvaita of Vallabha stress the mystic side of Vaisnavite experience.

The systems of Advaita, Dvaita and Visistādvaita are the most popular forms of Vedānta at present, and the other systems are either forgotten chapters in the history of Indian philosophy like the schools of Bhedābheda or different versions or variations of the three fundamental types like those of Nimbārka or S'rīkara. Each school has a sanctified tradition or sampradāya and an ever-growing critical and constructive philosophy; the best exponents of each school have always

been the patterns of their essential teachings. The position of each system is further strengthened by the opposition of rival schools in an atmosphere of disinterested criticism and becomes for that reason enriched by vākyas, vrttis and commentaries revealing rare dialectic and constructive skill. In the comparative study of Vedānta in the world of contemporary philosophy, eastern and western, the systems of Dvaita and Visistādvaita are not so well-known and appreciated as Advaita; and this is as much due to the default of the followers of the two systems, as to the defects in the provision of facilities for their study in the seats of learning. The study of Visistādvaita is of absorbing interest to all thinkers not only on account of its intrinsic value but also on account of its synthetic insight as a philosophy of religion. It mediates between philosophic monism on the one hand and the theism of Dvaita on the other. It has a universal appeal to humanity because it recognises the immanence of God in all beings and the innate spirituality and salvability of all jīvas, thus shedding the twin evils of exclusiveness and hatred. Visistādvaita gives an extended meaning to the pramānas, liberalises the theory of the sādhanas and exalts the value and destiny of the individual. In the highest sense of Vedānta, spiritual truth is true for ever and the worth of a true philosopher or Vedāntin does not depend on his birth, the status he may acquire or the language in which he may communicate his spirituality, though these conditions may have some determining influence on his character and scope for service. He has a soul sight of Brahman (Brahmadṛṣṭi) and realises Him in all beings and all beings in Him. Thus its supreme claim consists in its synthetic power and its uniqueness is expressed in its universality. Visistādvaita Siddhanta is synthetic in the sense that it defines God as love and the

universe as having its source and sustenance in that love. It is universal in the sense that it has a spiritual appeal to one and all.

Rāmānuja accepts the authority of the ancient and weighty tradition of the Sūtras established by Vedāntic teachers like Țanka, Guhadeva, Dramida, Kapardin and Bhāruci, and follows faithfully their teaching as expounded in the vitti of Bodhāyana and the bhāsya of Dramidācārya who is referred to as the Bhāṣyakāra. He not only recognises the eternity and self-validity of the Veda but also its integrity as a whole and its all-inclusive authority. The two Mīmāmsās of Jaimini and Bādarāyana are an organic whole which enquire into the connected meaning of the Veda. Rāmānuja considers the Pūrva Mīmāmsā philosophy of karma or duty as a necessary step to the Uttara Mīmāmsā philosophy of Brahman. Jaimini collects and collates in the sixteen chapters of the Karma Mīmāmsā Sūtras the nature of the Vedic imperative or dharma, and leaves it to Bādarāyana to develop in the remaining four chapters of the Brahma Mīmāmsā the full implications of the temporal and logical transition from the enquiry into karma to the enquiry into Brahman, and thus thinks together the interrelations of moral and philosophic experience. The vrttikāra also supports the view that the S'ārīraka is a continuation of the Sūtras of Jaimini. The truths of the sruti are intuitive and self-valid and are called bratyaksa; those of the smrti, like the Bhagavad Gītā which are deduced from the sruti, are as valid as the sruti itself. As the Pancaratra is the word of God leading to the supreme spiritual goal of godliness, it is as valid as the Veda. The highest proof of the existence of God is the experience of God by godly men. The Alvars, like the Vedic rsis, had a direct experience of God, and they invite humanity to share in the joy of their divine life. In an extended sense, the Veda is definable as a body of eternal spiritual truths which are verified and verifiable by spiritual experience, and Rāmānuja's exposition of sāstra thus satisfies the supreme demands of sruti, tarka and anubhava. Revelation is an ocean of knowledge, and the mumukṣu relies on revelation that is relevant to his spiritual needs, and thus selects only the essentials of Vedānta. This spiritual selection is different from the Advaitic method of sublation, which leads eventually to the sublation of the Veda itself. Rāmānuja adopts the sūtra method of samanvaya in solving the nature of truth which is visvatēmukha or many-sided. Because truth is comprehensive, it is many-sided, and the many sides point to the same supreme goal of Brahmajñāna.

While the ancient ācāryas accept the self-evident and eternal spiritual truths of the Veda and Vedanta, modern exponents apply the methods of historic and philosophic criticism to scriptural interpretation, and reject the traditional à briori way as scholastic or theological, as it subordinates reason to revelation and exposes itself to the fallacies of literalism and dogmatism. To them the Vedas are the compilations of different rsis at different times and places and the Vedic period is the age of groping and guessing at God. The transition to the Upanisadic period marks a gradual historic progression of thought from primitive naturalism, polytheism, and anthropomorphism to henotheism and from henotheism to pantheism and monistic idealism. The leading speculative ideas of the Upanisads are creative, floating mental possessions and do not hang together. While the earlier Upanisads. like the Chandogya are pre-Buddhistic and monistic, the later like the S'vetāsvatara are post-Buddhistic and theistic. In ethics, the Vedic rta anticipates the later theory of karma. The Upanisads, on the whole, present divergent and conflicting views, but if they reveal any system at all, it is idealistic monism, and theism is incompatible with this doctrine. In the Epic period, which comes next, intuition gave place to intellectual enquiry. The Rāmāyana was at first an epic poem, but it was later changed into a Vaisnavite treatise. especially in Books I and VII which are later additions. The Mahābhārata is a syncretism or vast mosaic of conflicting beliefs, and it was in this period that Visnu and S'iva werè made superior to other gods. The  $G\bar{\imath}t\bar{a}$  in the story is an adaptation made of the absolutism of the Ubanisads to the popular needs of theism, if not the degeneration of their monistic thought. It is an amalgamation of the pure philosophy of the Upanisads with the theism of the Bhagavata. whose origin is non-Vedic. The Gītā theory of Purusōttama is a synthesis of being-becoming or the impersonal and the personal, and its theism is only an idealisation of Varuna worship. The concept of the ten avatārs is a symbolic expression of the main stages in the onward march of the world from dust to deity. The Sūtra period, which came later, marks the rise of the critical spirit in philosophy and the summarisations of its teachings in the cryptic form of the Sūtras. The succeeding scholastic period witnessed the growth of polemic thought employed by dialecticians skilled in the art of logical and verbal warfare. Thus, historically and philosophically, there is a gradual fall from the monism of Yājñavalkya and Uddālaka to the theism of the S'vetās vatara and later deism, and philosophy had to compromise itself with the claims of logical faith. and satisfy the demands of popular religion. Visnu and S'iva, who were minor deities in the Vedic pantheon, now became the chief deities of Vaisnavism and S'aivism. In the Brahmana

period, Vișnu emerged into the supreme deity and still later into Visnu Nārāyana. The cult of Visnu Nārāyana was then blended with that of Bhagavān, which was non-Vedic in origin; it was then brahmanised and changed into Vaisnavism; Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa was then called Bhagavān and the Gītā identifies Nārāyaṇa with Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān, theologian Rāmānuja tried to synthesise the conflicting claims of Ubanisadic monism and non-Vedic theism by identifying the Brahman of the Upanisads with the successive ideas of Visnu Nārāyaṇa, Bhagavān and Kṛṣṇa, and thus reconciled the philosophy of Visistadvaita with the beliefs of Vaisnavism and S'rī Vaisnavism by fusing together Vedāntic non-dualism, the non-Vedic monotheism of the Pañcaratra, the theism of the Gītā and the faith of the Dravidian saints or Alvars. Thus it will be seen that while Advaita is a pure philosophy of the Upanisads, Visistādvaita is a mosaic of many trends of thought, Upanisadic and non-Upanisadic. Such, in brief, is the conclusion arrived at by those who apply the criticohistorical method to the study of our ancient religious literature.

The application of the above method to the study of Vedānta has, however, neither the definiteness of the time-honoured method of the ācāryas nor the disinterestedness associated with the principles of historic and scientific criticism. History describes certain unique events in space and time, and sticks to the particular and the personal, and cannot explain the eternal truths of Vedānta. Besides, we know more about the philosophies than the philosophers, as these authors of old effaced the personal factor in the dissemination of impersonal truths, and it was their invariable practice to begin their teaching thus: "It was said by

them of old," "Thus states the Veda." The historic origins are lost in sacred mystery. Besides, in Vedānta, the value of a truth is more important than its genesis. The scientific method is different from the conclusions of science, which have no finality, and is not much different from the Vedāntic method. Vedānta, as fully unified knowledge, is more concrete and comprehensive than scientific thought, which is only partially unified. It is the philosophic faith of the Vedāntin that divine truths are divinely revealed and intuited by the rsis who were specialists in spirituality. The intuition of Brahman transcends the limits of the logical intellect, though it is the fulfilment of logical thinking. But when the analytic intellect, in the interests of criticism, dissects the living pulsation of intuition, it gives us only dead things and discontinuous bits. It is inadmissible in Vedānta to apply to transcendental truths, the categories which have only an empirical use. The higher alone can explain the lower, and not the lower the higher. Vedāntic truths are true for ever, and have higher value than those given in sense perception, history and even philosophic speculation. While historic criticism may be plausible with regard to historic revelations, which depend on their founders, the eternal foundations of Vedānta stand for ever without the need for any prophets to reveal them or historic witnesses. Even S'rī Krsna, the Divine teacher of the  $G\bar{\imath}t\bar{a}$ , who uses the first personal pronoun more than any other, is content to say that He only finds and formulates an ancient s'āstraic truth and does not found it. The eternal and impersonal nature of sastra is accepted by all schools of Vedāntins who cannot be lightly dismissed as dogmatists and word-worshippers, and they insist on the philosophic faith in the integrity of sastra as the only source and guide to spiritual knowledge and the need for Vedantic disci-

pline as the only way to the realisation of Brahman. Vedāntic teacher is fully equipped with the knowledge of the canons of Vedic interpretation derived from his encyclopaedic mastery of the Vedas and the Vedāngas and he claims to be a seer of truth or tattvadarsi. S'āstra is an integral whole including the Vedas, smṛtis, itihāsas and purāṇas, and it has either to be accepted in toto or rejected. The astika deals with Vedic affirmations, and the nāstika with the negation of Vedic truths, but the position of the modern exponent, who accepts the Veda like the former and denies its eternity like the latter, is neither clear nor convincing. It is more confusing, when the critic is also a Vedāntic rationalist who affirms the identity philosophy by the denial of dualistic texts. The mumuksu is on safer ground when he treads the ancient path, and seeks the guidance of the Brahmavādins who have seen Brahman and can communicate their knowledge to him. S'ruti is what is immediately intuited by the rsis and smrti is what is inferred. from sruti; the itihāsas reveal the epic grandeur of the avatārs: as redeemers of mankind, and the puranas bring out the glory of the cosmic order and the sublime revelation of the divine comedy. The agamas are manuals for the practical realisation of Vedictruths. But in all cases of conflict and casuistry, the Vedantin falls back on the fundamental truths of the Veda: he is neither a fundamentalist nor a modernist, but a seeker after eternal truths enshrined in sastra and verifiable by intuitive experience.

The truth, that all the *Upaniṣads* teach the same coherent system and have the same consistency of logic and intuition, follows from their integrity as a whole in spite of the apparent discrepancies noticed in the *bheda* texts, *abheda* texts and texts affirming *bhedābheda*. The agreement among the

different Vedantic commentators in ascribing the same topic or viṣaya-vākya to each adhikaraņa testifies to the prevalence of a common Upanisadic tradition among them and the spiritual atmosphere in which they lived. Both S'ankara and Rāmānuja agree as to the general drift of the Sūtras and the arrangement of the topics. The texts quoted by them are largely from the Chandogya Upanisad and from the other recognised Upanisads like the Brhadāranyaka, Katha, Kausītaki, Īsa, Kena, Prasna, Taittirīya, Mundaka, and S'vetās vatara. The systematic exposition of the Upanisads given by Bādarāyana in the four chapters falls into line with the unity of Upanisadic import. The first two chapters define the nature of Brahman as the supreme tattva, the third chapter expounds the hita or the sādhanas for knowing Brahman, and the fourth chapter deals with the nature of mukti as the supreme purusārtha or end of life. The Bhagavad Gītā contains the cream of Vedānta; and the unity of the teaching of the Sūtras and the Gītā is further strengthened by the identity of the authorship of the Mahābhārata containing the Gītā and of the Vedānta Sūtras. Vyāsa, the arranger of the Vedas, the systematiser of the Upanisads in the Sūtras and the synthetic or syncretist author of the epic including the Gītā, may be the same rsi or different rsis; but the Vyasa genius for synoptic philosophy is clearly discernible in the three principal sources of Vedanta. All the exponents of the Sūtras including S'ankara and Rāmānuja accept the three prasthanas as equally valid and valuable. deal with the same ultimate problems of philosophy, and adopt the traditional method of exposition with the aid of nyāya, mīmāmsā and vyākarana.

Though S'ankara and Rāmānuja agree that the supreme end and aim of the Vedāntin as mumukṣu is to know Brahman and

thus attain freedom from ignorance and misery, and they bring out this truth in their exposition of the prasthanas, their conclusions are divergent, if not discrepant. As each siddhanta is enriched by a criticism of rival systems, a knowledge of the outlines of Advaita is presupposed in understanding Visistadvaita; and a brief summary of the former may serve as a critical introduction to the latter. Brahmajñāna in Advaita is jñāna that is Brahman and not of Brahman, and is therefore pure consciousness (nirvisesa cinmātra) which simply is and cannot be described, as it transcends or sublates relational thought. But as a philosophy, it has to establish this truth, and it does so in a negative way by denying false knowledge or ajñāna. Owing to avidyā, the ātman, which is pure consciousness, mistakes itself for anatman as the shell is mistaken for silver, and this leads to adhyāsa or the superimposition of anātman on ātman. Owing to māvā which is avidvā in its objective or cosmic aspect, the world of nāma-rūþa is superposed on Brahman, and therefore appears to be real. How the real co-exists with the unreal and is conjoined with it is the crux of monistic metaphysics. The problem is admitted, but the solution is that it somehow exists there, indeterminable philosophically. But the problem is dissolved when ajñāna is sublated by iñana in the state of Brahma nirvana or pure consciousness just as one thorn is used to remove another and both are thrown away afterwards. Pure consciousness is eternal or timeless, effulgent, beyond the subject-object consciousness and thus absolutely transcends the relation of the enjoyer or bhokta and the object enjoyed or bhogya. It is sat, cit, ananda not in the adjectival sense but as absolute experience realised in jīvanmukti. Really speaking there is no mumuksu or mukta, as the jīva is ever identical with Brahman. Mumuksutva is, in a sense, a process of negating negation by eliminating the false by renouncing the pleasures of sensibility and by transcending the vrtis. The only  $s\bar{a}dhana$  is the sublation of the dual consciousness of  $avidy\bar{a}$  by the awakening of non-dual consciousness.  $Vidy\bar{a}$  shines by itself when  $avidy\bar{a}$  is dispelled. Reality transcends relational thought and difference. Then the One remains without a second, ever self-effulgent and as infinite bliss.

But as only a few can rise to the heights of Advaitic experience and its world-negating logic, S'ankara, following sruti, recognises the principle of adhikāribheda and s'ākhā-candra nyāya, and adapts his teaching to the needs of the popular consciousness. The aspirant is led gradually from truth to higher truth till the highest is self-realised. The religious consciousness is the nearest approach to Advaita and a distinction is drawn between parā vidyā and aparā vidyā. The former refers to the esoteric knowledge of nirguņa Brahman and the need for the stultification of avidyā and adhvāsa by the intuition of the self-identity of Brahman or aparōksa jñāna. But the latter describes the exoteric knowledge of saguna Brahman as the supreme cause of the universe and the need for attaining Brahman in the world yonder by means of upāsanā or bhakti. Thus from the practical or vyāvahārika point of view, the theist is fully justified when he posits the reality of jagat, jīva and Īsvara or nature, self and God on the basis of sastra, insists on moral and spiritual discipline as essential steps to salvation and regards bhakti and kainkarya as the supreme end of spiritual life. But this dualistic view is itself a stage and not a stopping place and it is transcended in the experience of Advaita. Though S'ankara is theoretically an uncompromising Advaitin, he is tolerant enough to recognise the needs of the empirically-minded. In his theory of aparā vidyā he provides for the ignorant-minded by conceding the phenomenal existence of saguna Brahman as the cosmic goal of the jīva and the truth of krama-mukti. But when the adhikārī rises to the pāramārthika level of parā vidyā, he is fit for the knowledge of nirguna Brahman and jīvanmukti by the sublation of avidyā and by becoming a jīvanmukta.

Some modern expositors of Advaita, European as well as Indian, who apply the methods of philosophic criticism to the study of Vedānta do not clearly define the boundary line between Buddhism, Advaita, Bhedābheda and Visistādvaita. Deussen, for example, is so much drawn by the identity philosophy expressed in the equation "Thou art That," that he feels philosophically constrained to separate metaphysics from exoteric religion and thus free S'ankara from his theological bias which obliges him to compromise with commonsense and ignorance and to refer to two standpoints. To him, the fundamental want of Vedānta or Advaita is the absence of proper morality such as is found in the Christian ideal of human brotherhood and of the lack of the solution of what corresponds to the theological faith in the saving grace of God. But in his desire to synthesise reason and will and the theory of unio mystico, he drifts unconsciously into the views of inanakarma-samuccaya and ekībhāva of Bhāskara. Gough wrongly thinks that S'ankara is the generally recognised expositor of the true Vedantic doctrine traditionally handed down to him by a line of teachers from the age of the S'ūtrakāra and that there existed from the beginning only one Vedāntic doctrine agreeing in all essential points with Advaita. But he concludes that it is a philosophy of stagnation favouring a life of inertia and void, and that it is an empty intellectual abstraction

devoid of spirituality and of the virility of western thought. A large portion of the western criticism of *Vedānta* is directed against pan-illusionism and the reflection theory, and the absence of proper morality. This is mainly due to a confused understanding of the relations between *Mādhyamika* Buddhism, *Yōga* practice and *Māyāvāda* and the alliance between intellectual monism and atheistic Buddhism against the main currents of Indian life.

In a critical investigation of the teaching of the Sūtras based on a comparative study of the commentaries of S'ankara and Rāmānuja, Thibaut thinks that he is able to judge for himself the general drift of the text without the aid of scholiasts who often strain the texts to suit their pre-conceived siddhanta, and concludes that the system of Badarāyana agrees more with that of the theologian Rāmānuja than with that of S'ankara with his two standpoints. The Upanisads are so conflicting that no coherent theory can be evolved from them; the Sūtras may not set forth the same doctrine as the Upanisads, and S'ankara is not anxious to strengthen his own case by appeal to ancient authorities. But if the task of systematisation is once given, S'ankara's system is probably the best and safest that can be devised. It represents orthodox Brahminical theology at its best and is alone called Vedānta, and no other system can compare with it in boldness, depth and subtlety of speculation. But Advaita is too little in sympathy with the wants of the human heart; and the system of Rämānuja influenced by the Bhāgavata school and the Bhagavad Gītā alone satisfies the needs of love. After having assigned the Upanisads to S'ankara and the Sūtras to Rāmānuja, Thibaut suggests a synthetic view of some "other commentator," who may be

Bhāskara. According to other interpreters of Advaita, it is only a non-dualism that denies difference and not a monism that affirms identity; the illusion theory is audacious but not adequate, and should give place to the view that the world of space and time has phenomenal reality and is not fictitious, and that Brahman can be intuited and not conceived by the logical intellect. Still others rely on the adequacy of reason to understand Advaita without seeking the aid of revelation and intuition, and think that by the analysis of the three states of consciousness, especially of sleep, duality is sublated and pure consciousness is self-established. Extreme idealists accept only eka-jīva, deny the objective order and the religious consciousness of a Thou or Isvara and conclude that the inner seer or drk is alone real and absolute.

If, as the Advaitins generally say, S'ankara came to establish religions and not to eliminate them finally, then it is not clear whether his attitude to religions was one of compromise, condescension or synthetic understanding. The view that his siddhanta is not the rejection of religious values but is based on the ideal that truth admits of a passage from truth to more truth is commendable but not satisfactory. It is not consistent with the philosophy of sublation, as there is really no middle ground between satya and mithyā. The spirit of compromise has no place in philosophy, especially if it is toaccommodate itself to ignorance. The view that there is a Vedāntic ladder from Dvaita to Visistādvaita and finally to. Advaita as the highest stage savours of the spirit of condescension arising from the sense of superiority complex. This tendency is clearly discernible in their comparative estimate

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Sarva Darsana Sangraha of Mādhavācārya describes sixteem systems in an ascending order and gives the highest place to Advaita.

of Advaita and Visistādvaita. Nirguna Brahman is said tobe the intuitional highest, and saguna Brahman the highest conceptual reading of the absolute, and the logical highest. God is made in man's image and is less than the Godhead and to speak of the world of Brahman is to limit in terms of space and time what is infinite and eternal. Rāmānuja is therefore only in the level of theology and theism, and he does not rise to the level of Advaita jñāna. His view isan amalgam of Upanisadic monism, the theism of the Pañcarātra which is anti-Vedic, and the emotionalism of the Dravidian saints or Alvars, and therefore it has not the philosophic dignity and integrity of Advaita. But as it satisfies theaspirations of the religious consciousness of the ignorant man, it is pragmatically plausible and true. This method of approach is open to serious objections and cannot be accepted. On the other hand the theory of dual standpoints involves S'ankara in the dualism between jñāna and avidyā and defeats. the purpose of non-dualism. If Advaita is identity-consciousness, then no philosophy or religion can be strictly deduced from it; such a deduction is purely dogmatic. But if it should satisfy the needs of philosophy and religion and the highest values of life, it should come into line with Visistādvaita.

The problem of *Vedānta* is stated thus: "What is that One by knowing which all things are known?" S'aṅkara solves it by saying that Brahman only is real and therefore *jagat* is false, and that falsity is stultified by *Brahmajñāna* or *jñāna* that is identical with Brahman. *Avidyā* causes the sense of difference and plurality, and by the removal of *avidyā*, Brahman is known to be identical with itself. Rāmānuja answers the same problem by his theory that, as Brahman is the All-Self

or s'arīrin of the world of cit and acit, by knowing Him, the world, His sarīra or prakāra, is also known. Īsvara is the absolute and not a lapse from it. Since Brahman is real as the All-Self, all things and thoughts are equally real. The world is a living expression of the Infinite and not an illusory phantom. If jñāna is pure consciousness without a self to illumine it and an object to be illuminated by it, it is a soulless, bloodless abstraction; and it would lapse into the unconscious. Brahmajñāna therefore means the jñāna of Brahman by the freed self who intuits Him in all beings and all beings in Him. This is true knowledge, and truth is an immanent standard which is fully realised only when the absolute or Brahman is realised. With Rāmānuja, reality and value go together. Brahman as Supreme Reality is also the home of eternal values such as truth, goodness, beauty and bliss; Brahman is therefore defined as the ground of all existents and the goal of all experients. This knowledge is the alpha and the omega of the Brahma Sūtras. He is the All-Self that is in all things but not as all things, and is therefore immanent in the world of nature as the causal order, having parināmic changes, and at the same time transcendent, as He is beyond the moral order, free from the imperfections of karma. This view remedies the defects of deism and immanentism. The perfect enters into the imperfect with a view to perfecting it and imparting its nature to it. This is the līlā of love which is not a mystery like the Advaita theory of avidyā, but a reality which the mystic realises. The self is an eternal entity like the All-Self, but at the same time, it is an irradiation of the supreme Light, the Light of the universe. It is a monad and a mode, and has substantive and adjectival existence. This jīva is not a mere self-subsisting exclusive entity, as it has its meaning and life only in Brahman. While the  $j\bar{\imath}va$  is infinitesimal like a spark, its intelligence is all-pervasive and can know all things if it is freed from karma. When the philosopher turns  $mumuk \bar{\imath}u$ , he recollects his divine heritage and by moral and spiritual discipline sheds his  $avidy\bar{a}$  and  $ahank\bar{a}ra$ , intuits the absolute and enjoys eternal bliss. Thus  $Ved\bar{a}nta$  points to Brahman as the only source and security of the self or  $j\bar{\imath}va$  which is subject to the ills of  $avidy\bar{a}$  and karma. The  $vidv\bar{a}n$  knows Brahman and works for world-welfare and for the attainment of Brahman by all.

Thus, in their siddhanta, S'ankara and Ramanuja have fundamental differences as regards s'āstraic authority, ontology and the destiny of the self. S'ankara applies the Occam's razor of sublation to all branches of study and even the Veda is stultified in the transcendental self-identity of Brahman. to Rāmānuja, the Veda leads the aspirant step by step to thesupreme goal. S'āstra is a body of eternal truths which are verified by rsis and Alvars; the very word of God revealed in the Pañcaratra is realised in the Tamil Prabandha. Thus he synthesises revelation, reason and intuition and recognises the full value of Vāda as a disinterested pursuit of Truth without jalpa or vitandā and as a divine quality. In his ontology Rāmānuja postulates that Brahman is the absolute of metaphysics and Bhagavān or God of religion and he rejects. the theory of two Brahmans on the ground that stastra nowhere accepts God at first with a view to denying His existence later. S'ankara's cosmology is ultimately merged in psychology and subjectivism. But to Rāmānuja Brahman is the Self of theuniverse and the Self of the ātman, and the mumuksu meditates on Brahman as the world-ground with a view to avoiding

Bhagavad Gītā, X. 32.

the perils of subjectivism and the ego-centric feeling. As regards the finite self, S'aṅkara posits its monadic nature and moral freedom by following the Sūtras, and then explains it away as a mere appearance or illusion. The reality of the self as jivātma and Paramātma is insisted on by Rāmānuja; but they are treated as mere appearances of the absolute by S'aṅkara. While S'aṅkara explains mukti as the knowledge of the self-identity of Brahman by the removal of the self-contradictions of jīva-Īsvara, Rāmānuja, recognising the full value of moral and spiritual discipline, expounds mukti as the direct apprehension and attainment of Brahman and as freedom from embodiment and not in embodiment, and from the whole phenomenal series of space-time and the fetters of karma.

In all crucial cases in the textual and philosophic exposition of the Vedānta Sūtras, like the topics on the nature of Brahman as ānandamaya, on cosmic evolution and on the jīva and its destiny, Rāmānuja faithfully follows the Sūtrakāra; but S'ankara first accepts the Sūtras and then rejects their direct meaning on independent grounds by his all-destroying concept of nirguna Brahman, vivartavāda and jīvanmukti. main object of Rāmānuja in his siddhānta is to join issue with S'ankara in his dialectic speculation, by appeal to sāstra, the rules of Mīmāmsā and logic and secular and spiritual experience and to repudiate the theory of two Brahmans, the two cosmic ideas of parinama and vivarta and the two kinds of mukti and to establish the unity of Vedāntic knowledge. He is entirely opposed to dogmatism as he insists on the integrity of the pramanas as a whole. In contemporary Indian philosophy, Vedānta is overweighted on the side of Advaita; and the balance will be restored only when the other systems of Vedānta, notably that of Rāmānuja, are widely known and

study of Vedānta is essential to the understanding of Indian culture and its synthetic genius, and this can be best achieved by a knowledge of the fundamental features of Vedānta as a whole. But before this task is attempted, it is necessary that Visiṣṭādvaita comes to its own in the world of modern Vedāntic thought as a siddhānta as well as a synthesis. The method adopted in this work is both critical and constructive; it is based on an appeal to conviction and not to credulousness and is the time-honoured method of Indian philosophy, which consists in the establishment of one's siddhānta by the refutation of opposing theories which are called pūrva pakṣas.

The concluding chapter, however, adopts the synthetic method and considers the points of convergence between the main schools of Vedānta. What is called synthesis in philosophy is equivalent to the unifying power of love in religion. Visistādvaita is the meeting ground of the extremes in philosophy like monism and pluralism, and has the intrinsic value of containing what is true, good and beautiful in other systems, though it rejects what contradicts its essentials. It accepts the practical Advaita of S'ankara as a Brahmavādin who follows the way of ethical religion as opposed to the Māvāvāda of pure Advaita with its leanings towards the negative method of Nāgārjuna. It also supports Vedāntic theism in so far as its metaphysical theory of Bhedavāda supports mysticism. The principles of Sānkhyan psychology, the ethical discipline contained in the yōgic sādhanas, the Nyāya view that the study of the pramanas or organon of knowledge is essential to philosophic construction and the Mīmāmsā theory of the primacy of dharma or duty are the living truths of the six darsanas and they naturally fit into the scheme of Visistādvaita. It may even include in its sweep the philanthropic ideas of Jainism and Buddhism if they go far enough and accept their Visistādvaitic background. There can be nometaphysics without physics; physics has its completion in the psychology of the self. Psychology leads to ethics, and ethics. has its meaning only in religion. Thus in Visistadvaita all these sciences are vitally related and related to philosophy as a whole. Visistādvaitic religion has no objection to other religions if they accept the immanence of Vāsudeva in all gods and in all faiths. With its loyalty to the Upanisads as the source of wisdom, the Sūtras as their philosophical criterion and the Gītā as the crown of spirituality, it enters into the soul of humanity and extends the hospitality of love to all sects. If Visistādvaita is reinterpreted in terms of modern thought without doing violence to its essentials, it is sure to throw fresh light on the vexed problems of to-day including even the economic, political and educational ideals and to remedy the ills of humanity. This work is a humble attempt at presenting the central features of the philosophy of Visistādvaita as an introduction to its detailed study.

The study of Visistādvaita will be found to have immense-value even to the western thinker who is deeply interested in philosophy, which is speculative as well as spiritual and synthetic. The problem of philosophy is formulated in a threefold way by Kant—What can I know? What should I do? What may I hope for? His three critiques dealing with the examination of theoretic reason, morality and aesthetics fail to offer any solution. The first concludes that one can know only the phenomena or the appearances of Reality and not Reality itself and it leads to agnosticism and scepticism. The

second postulates the freedom of the will, immortality of the self and the existence of God as a moral necessity; but it creates a wide gulf between reason and feeling and makes the moral law formal and empty. The third recognises the importance of aesthetic imagination; but it also suffers from the abstract method. The chief successors of Kant, namely, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, think that Reality can be explained. Hegel identifies logic with ontology and makes Reality rational; but his panlogism has the defects of mere intellectualism. Fighte stresses the ethical side of Kant when he explains philosophy in terms of acts of will as opposed to facts of knowledge, but his idealism is mere progressivism without any finality. Schelling expounds the nature of the absolute in terms of artistic creation and intellectual intuition; but his pantheism does not fully satisfy the demands of aesthetic philosophy. Thus the answers to the three problems given by the three idealist philosophers are also fractional and abstract and liable to the defects of intellectualism, voluntarism and emotional mysticism; and they tend to explain away the facts of error, evil and ugliness. Visistādvaita is free from their one-sidedness as it co-ordinates thought or theoretic reason, will or morality and feeling or aesthetics, synthesises the values of truth, goodness and beauty and harmonises all contradictions. It furnishes the true philosophic justification for the dominant interest in contemporary philosophy in integrating all kinds of knowledge. The tendency in western thought to-day is the increasing good-will between science and philosophy by avoiding the evils of sectional thinking and sterile speculation, the rapprochement between realism and idealism by overcoming the defects of materialism and mentalism, the reconciliation of religion and philosophy by giving up the pitfalls of dogmatism and scepticism and recognising the innate spirituality of man. Visiṣṭādvaita is a synoptic philosophy par excellence as it solves the agelong problems of life and furnishes an inspiring motive for the meeting of the east and the west in philosophy and promoting inter-religious understanding.

## CHAPTER I

## PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

IS'ISTĀDVAITA is neither pure philosophy nor pure religion, but is really a philosophy of religion. As such, it offers a contrast, on the one hand, to mere philosophical speculation on the whole of reality, especially of the western type, and, on the other hand, to religion in the sense of a faith in revealed theology based on the evidence of miracles. Theology insists on dogmatic faith in truths regarded as infallible on account of scriptural authority or divine disclosure, and is therefore antagonistic to the free exercise of reason on the facts provided by human experience. Philosophy revolts against slavish allegiance to the dictatorship of dogmatic theology. It insists on the critical examination of all facts and doctrines at the bar of reason and criticises and clarifies ideas which are accepted uncritically. Rāmānuja's system of Visistādvaita recognises the claims of both faith and reason and aims at harmonising or reconciling them by admitting a free play of reason not only on the data of sense-perception and inference. but also on the spiritual intuition or anubhava of the great seers and the doctrines or views recorded in the scriptures.

The friction between faith and philosophy is sought to be removed by some thinkers by defining and restricting their spheres and by assigning to the former the realm of the supernatural and to the latter the world of nature. But the frontier

line between the two realms is hazy and arbitrary, and increases the tension instead of relieving it. The conflict between faith and philosophy is mainly due to the difference in their method of approach or enquiry. Faith claims finality, and, when it is supported by reason working in a subordinate capacity as its handmaid, it becomes dogmatic. When dogma is crystallized by tradition and sanctified by the worship of the word, it claims absolute allegiance; faith then ends in fanaticism. Philosophy, on the other hand, rejects the way of faith, accepts only the guidance of reason, and follows its conclusions, whatever they may be. But it often starts with doubting everything, and ends also with doubts without offering any solution to the problems posed by it. The natural light of reason often suffers from the perils of free thinking and leads to atheism. Theology, therefore, condemns its guidance and takes refuge in faith. This conflict between faith and philosophy will cease only if they retrace their steps and become reconciled in a true philosophy of religion.

The warfare between scientific and secular thought on one side and religious and supersensuous knowledge on the other is waged in five different regions with varying results. The first stage is that of the tension between naturalism and supernaturalism; the second is that of the collision between vitalism and animism. The third is that of the opposition between mentalism and anthropomorphism. Next comes the controversy between rationalism and theology in their answers to the question of the nature of reality. The fifth or last stage of conflict is in the region where intuition and revealed religion confront each other as irreconcilable enemies. A few words of explanation may be necessary for a clearer and fuller understanding of this five-fold conflict.

The points at issue between naturalism and supernaturalism may be considered first. Natural science has no doubts in thinking that its realm of enquiry, namely, that of matter, is alone worth while, and it rejects theological doctrines as the flights of fancy. The scientific thinker, who explains the facts given in sense-perception, turns realist when he traces the source of knowledge solely to the external world. He is a naturalist affirming the priority and primacy of matter and an upholder of the truth of svabhava-vada. To him matter alone is real and mind is, as it were, a by-product of matter and a late arrival in the world-process. The world of nature is a series of physico-chemical changes. Life evolves out of nonliving matter. Consciousness and self-consciousness emerge, in the course of evolution through the ages, from the primordial physical stuff. All changes in nature should be explained naturally and not supernaturally. The universe of space-time moves endlessly in a soulless, mechanical way and without any purpose or design, because it is its svabhāva or nature to do so. The atomic theory, for instance, traces the universe to the existence of primordial atoms and their varied combinations. Even the beliefs of the mind arise out of the dance, so to speak, of the atoms in the brain. Moral freedom is a fiction, and spiritual craving a disease of the brain. Religious faith may be traced to fear or the aberrations caused by the suppression of instincts. Natural science finds no proof or evidence for the existence of God and rejects the belief in a god as an unnecessary hypothesis.

The Cārvāka, or the Indian materialist, is even more thorough in his repudiation of religion than the western

naturalist. He accepts only the immediate evidence of senseperception and rejects the validity of inference or anumana as well as the seer's or vogin's sense of the supernatural. True knowledge is, according to the Cārvāka, given only in senseperception which refers to the here and now. The universal or vyāpti can never be derived from the particulars of senseperception or pratyaksa-jñāna. The world of nature is made up of four bhūtas or elements, earth, water, fire and air, and it alone is real. The so-called atman is only an aggregate of these elements, and it is dissolved with the dissolution of the body at the time of death. Mind emerges from the combination of elements even as the red colour does when the betel leaf, the arecanut and lime are chewed together. It is only a function of matter. Sense-perception being the only test of truth, there is no evidence of the survival of a soul after death. The Cārvāka holds that pleasure is the end of conduct and the sole aim of life. The Veda is false and of no validity and appeals only to the ignorant mind. There is no heaven nor hell, and mukti or release cannot mean anything but death. Virocana, the king of the Asuras, is on the level of the Cārvāka when he accepts the identification of the ātman with the body.1

Materialism, western as well as eastern, is common sense in a thinking mood. As the protest of science against superstition, it may have some significance; but the religious consciousness is outraged by its denial of moral and spiritual values. The immediate reaction of the religious consciousness to materialism is faith in the supernatural. The religious nature is apt to exclaim: "Even if God does not exist, He

¹ sa ha s'āntaḥṛdaya eva virōcanō'surāfijagāma tebhyō haitāmupaniṣadam prōvāca ll (Ch. Upan., Chap. VIII, Khaṇḍa 8.)

has to be invented for the satisfaction of faith and the conservation of moral values." Faith distrusts the evidence of sense-perception and reason as they are not infallible. It believes, even regardless of reason, in a spiritual universe of which the visible and tangible world is only a part. Beyond the natural, there is a realm of the supernatural. There is a 'more' that controls man from without and often frustrates all his calculations. The mechanical view of the uniformity of nature which is the cardinal principle of materialistic science is discarded in favour of a belief in the miraculous and in the suspension of the natural law by the intervention of supernatural agencies. These exercise a mysterious control over man's destiny and often overturn his expectations. believer in the supernatural may be a monotheist, but is more often a polytheist. He believes in the saving power of prayer and propitiation by means of sacrifices and expects to be rewarded for his acts of propitiation.

The contest between naturalism and supernaturalism is of value in so far as it leads to a recognition of the fact that matter is real, though the materialistic outlook is false. It is clear also that a metaphysical system cannot be built on the foundations of the physico-chemical sciences and mathematics. Polytheism, crass or refined, cannot satisfy the demand of reason for unity and the ethical claims of righteousness. The polytheistic heaven is often soiled by ugly passions and unrighteous wars. Its pleasures, too, are perishing and, in their result, painful. The faith in miracles demoralises the believer and attributes caprice to the divine nature.

The next phase in the conflict of reason and faith is that between vitalism and animism. Vitalism accepts the

primacy of reason, and denies the validity of faith; but it repudiates the mechanistic view of life. According to vitalism, as held by biological thinkers, life is a higher category than matter. It is autonomous and is not originated from matter or externally determined in any other way. Life cannot be explained by mere physico-chemical changes, as it is sui generis, having the power of spontaneity and self-emergence. Nature is alive and has the activities of moving and changing. It is self-sustained and possesses persistence and variation. It can reproduce and multiply itself. The vitalist-philosopher who reflects on the conclusions of biological science considers the essence of reality as a vital essence, entelechy or elan vital. Life is an inner creative activity, according to him, or an entelechy midway between the physical thing and the mental process since it does not act in space, but acts into it. This primal principle or impulse contains the potency of the later growth into plant, animal and man. Life breaks up and blends and becomes more life. Reality is, therefore, creative evolution, though the practical intellect, in trying to understand it, mechanises its spontaneity. The intellect spatialises the free flow of life and makes sections of it; but the philosophic seer should intuit the inner creative urge in nature and not be misled by the mechanising intellect. But philosophy as vitalism cannot satisfy the thinker. The category of life which it postulates is only the result of speculative activity and may be useful in secular life. The religious consciousness cannot accept vitalism and it protests against this view by opposing to it the theories of animism and brānaism.

Animism attributes life and divinity to nature. It assumes different forms such as metempsychosis, fetichism, totemism and

spiritism. Every natural object is looked upon as animate and endowed with a spirit. This spirit survives after death in a disembodied state. Animism often deifies the spirits of the dead who become objects of worship. The divine spirit may be encased in metals and even in pebbles. Prānaism posits the pre-eminence of brana or the life-breath as the life-giving deity in the universe. It is illustrated in the well-known story of the Ubanisads of the deities of speech, sound, sight, mind and prana contending for supremacy in the maintenance of the body. While the first four left the body, it continued alive; but when prana attempted to leave the body, it tore, as it were, the indrivas or senses from the body along with itself. The other deities were then obliged to acknowledge the supremacy of brana.1 "Prana is the sum-total of the physical and mental forces in the universe resolved to their original state." By controlling it everything else is controlled also. Mukhya-prāna is the deity that leads the freed soul back to its home in the world of Brahman and is worthy of adoration. The Pratardana Vidyā of the Kausītaki Upanisad refers to meditations on prana, which the purvapaksin or objector identifies as the primal source of all sentient and non-sentient beings.2

Visiṣṭādvaita is opposed to both the philosophy of vitalism and the religion of animism. Reality is life, but the category of life does not exhaust the whole range of reality; and the highest moral and spiritual values of experience

¹ athaḥ prāṇa uccikramiṣan sa yāthāsuhayaḥ ṣadvīs'as'ankūn saṅkhided evam itarān prāṇān samakhidat tam hābhisamētya ūcur Bhagavannēdhi tvam nas's'reṣṭhōsi mā utkramīriti, (Ch. Up., V. i. 12). tasminnutkrāmatyathētarē sarva eva utkrāmantē tasmins'ca prathiṣṭhannan sarva ēva prātiṣthantē tē pritāh prāṇam stunvanti (Prasnopaniṣad, II, 4.) te ho'cur mā bhagava utkaramīr na vai s'akṣṣāmas tvad ṛte jivītum itī. (Br. Up., VI. i. 13.)

<sup>🖊 🌣</sup> prāņo'smi prajnātmā tam mām āyur amṛtam ityupāsva (Kauṣi. Up., III. 1).

cannot be adequately expressed by living cells and protoplasm. Vedānta does not accept animism in any form as true religion and the term prāna in the Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad connotes not the vital breath or vital principle but the absolute Brahman as the life of our life. True religion begins with theism and not with animism. To identify arca or image worship with fetichism betrays ignorance and scientific prejudice, as the arca is the incarnation of the infinite in the finite. The category of life or prāṇa has, however, a vital influence in religious experience, though the vivifying power comes from the Paramātman or Supreme Self who is the life of all life. The conflict between vitalism and animism is continued and carried on in a higher plane as sensationalism versus anthropomorphism, which, as has already been pointed out, is the third phase of the struggle.

Reality, according to sensationalism, is not to be explained mechanically or biologically, but as a mental continuum or stream of psychic presentations. Buddhism is, in some of its forms, of the nature of sensationalism. Consciousness is sui generis and not an emergence from matter and life according to it. The materialist errs in thinking that mind evolves and emerges from matter. External objects are not self-existent substances having extra-mental reality, but are only a cluster of atomic sensations or configurations. There is no substance like matter or self forming the substratum of sensations. The self is only a stream of perceptions and a series of psychic states. Likewise there are no data by which the existence of God can be demonstrated. From the genetic point of view, the faith in a future world and in religion may be traced to the fear of death and the passion for revenge, Buddhism, as a psychological theory of reality, denies the permanence

of the self and holds the view that consciousness is only momentary and that the soul is only a stream of successive presentations. The so-called *ātman* or self is a complex of form, feeling, will and thought and is a fleeting flux. The theory of an enduring self is a delusion.

Psychology is descriptive and it does not accept the metaphysical view of a psyche or self. Consciousness is a mere continuum without a self. The so-called subject is a series of momentary mental states and is not a metaphysical entity. The mental process is a ceaseless becoming, and permanence is an illusion. The religious consciousness is explained psychologically as the effect of psycho-physical degeneration like hysteria and sexual morbidity. Closely allied to this denial of the existence of a psyche or soul and of God is the view held by certain modern thinkers that there is an innate tendency in man to create a God and to attribute to Him qualities which belong to himself. Many psychologists trace the origin of the religious feeling to this anthropomorphic tendency. As examples of anthropomorphism, we may consider the two types described by Orientalists in their study of the evolution of religion. The lower type is exemplified in their description of the development of the Aryan religion, and represents the God-making process that is in human nature. God is made in the image of man and invested with the feelings and motives of the votary. "If oxen and horses could paint like men they would paint Gods as oxen and horses." In the earlier stages the powers of nature were personified and deified into distinct gods with supernatural powers and were often combined by a process of syncretism. Anthropomorphism has affinities to the myth-making tendency of primitive religion, which consists in organising them

into a pantheon. Polytheism develops into henotheism when it exalts a departmental deity into a supreme god and ends in monotheism. Man fulfils a design in life and it is analogically inferred that there is a cosmic designer or God. In the process of deification, relapse is as common as progress, e.g., it is said that in the Vedic pantheon Varuna and Brahmā were at first idealised and elevated into the supreme heights of monotheism and pantheism respectively and were later somehow dethroned and replaced by other gods. The Vedic Rudra has now evolved into the Rudra S'iva of S'aivism who is both an angry and an auspicious deity. Likewise, the worship of the Vedic deity Visnu is fused with the Nārāyana cult and the Vāsudeva cult and has now become the Visnu-Nārāvana religion of Vaisnavism. The story of the avatārs of Visnu is the puranic way of tracing the evolutionary ascent of man from the sub-human levels and zoomorphic incarnations. While this God-making tendency is common to the Arvan mind, the Semitic race is stated always to have retained a higher anthropomorphic and monotheistic level. Its essential faith is the reverse of the crasser type, as it holds that man is made in the image of God and not God in the image of man.

Visiṣṭādvaita rejects the psychological view of reality as inadequate and unsatisfactory. The postulation of a mental series without an enduring self behind it is self-contradictory. Being is always presupposed in the process of becoming. The view that consciousness is momentary and perishing fails to explain the reality of the persistence of the self based upon personal identity. The self is not a mere aggregate of the five skandas, but is a permanent subject which makes possible the synthetic unity of different sensations. The

sensationalistic view would lead to nihilism as is illustrated in the history of European thought in the transition from Locke to Hume. The critico-historic method of the psychologists applied to the evolution of religion oversteps its limits and militates against the integrity of religious experience. No religious man would accept the view that he makes God in his own image. The theory that Vedic polytheism grows into Upanisadic pantheism and relapses again into the theism of the Gītā is a dogmatic assertion based on illegitimate speculation. Religious truths are supersensuous and eternal and they cannot be discerned wholly by historic judgments which apply only to events in sense-perception. The true Vedic method is spiritual instruction according to the qualification and needs of the aspirant or adhikāri. This is well brought out in the teaching of Varuna to Bhrgu and of Sanatkumāra to Nārada.' The Vedānta Sūtras, accepted by all the orthodox schools of Indian philosophy, afford the true insight into Vedic religion when they explain the worship of the different Vedic gods as that of their inner self or antaryamin who is the supreme Brahman. The object of Vedānta is to raise man to the level of God. The finite is to be infinitised and not the Infinite humanised. True religion is therefore not a nature-religion but is a self-revelation of God to the self with a view to perfect it. The idea that religious faith is induced by the psychological conditions of life like fear, anger and sex is beside the mark, as religious consciousness is spiritual and not sensual. The conflict between philosophy and religion is not reconciled on the mental level, but it is carried on in the higher plane of reason, as the warfare between rationalism and belief.

<sup>1</sup> Taitt. Up., Bhrguvalli and Ch. Up., Ch. VII.

The fourth phase of the contest between philosophy and faith has been referred to as that between rationalism and theology. Reason marks the transition in knowledge from consciousness to self-consciousness, and the rationalist employs the logical method of determining truth in a clear and distinct way. Metaphysics, according to the rationalist, is based upon physics and is not hostile to it. The distinction between science and philosophy is only in the range of unified knowledge and not in their method. Both throw off the fetters of theology and strike into the path of free enquiry. The rationalist's position may be described as follows:

Philosophy seeks the liberation of thought from the tyranny of dogmatic theology and it is the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake founded on the inner light of reason and reflection. It is a process of self-criticism freed from subjection to external authority and its method is rationalistic on account of its acceptance of reason as the highest authority in the acquisition of truth. The mind should be freed from the prejudices arising from what Bacon calls the idols of the tribe, the den, the market and the theatre. By doubting and destroying every received or inherited opinion or belief, it is possible to reconstruct knowledge and make it coherent. It is the task of philosophy as an intellectual enquiry into the whole of reality to frame the ultimate problems of life. Of the three persistent problems of philosophy, namely, those of God, nature and the self, the enquiry into the nature of God is the most valuable. The existence of God is established by the well-known theistic proofs and not by revealed theology. The teleological argument infers from the beauty and goodness in the universe the existence of a world architect. The universe is purposeful and requires a designer. Creation is the workmanship of a wise God. The cosmological argument employs the idea of causation and proves God as the first cause that exists per se. As the Naiyāyika or logician says, the world is an effect and must have been produced by an agent or controller called *Isvara*. Everything that exists is produced and should refer to a Being that is the real ground of all things. The ontological argument consists in showing that the idea of a perfect being that is in the mind should have been implanted in it by the infinite God and He should therefore exist. Moral reason demands the union of duty and happiness and requires us to postulate a moral Being who connects the natural and moral orders. In this way reason becomes the ally of religion and this rational religion is called natural theology as contrasted with revealed theology, which relies entirely on belief. Monism, which also claims to be based on reason rather than on revelation, allies itself with scepticism in rejecting the theistic proofs and dethroning the God of religion. The proofs are said to make an illegitimate use of categories which are applicable only to phenomenal reality, and we cannot go from the WHAT to the THAT which is beyond thought. The teleological proof, it is argued, is no proof at all, as there is no design or goodness in the world and it can be proved by appeal to experience that the world is irrational and is the worst of all possible worlds, as it is rooted in arbitrariness, injustice and cruelty. The idea of an external Designer, a remote God who has no intimate relation with the world, is based on false analogy. It is spiritually worthless and the very term 'Almighty' brings out the despotic might of the Deity and His delight in inflicting unmerited suffering.

The cosmological theory of a first cause, an uncaused cause and a prime mover is a nest of self-contradictions from

which there is no escape. Inference is a logical method and there is no passage from finite knowledge to the infinite. The proof admits of a plurality of causes and creators and is not therefore theistic. As regards the ontological argument it is not permissible to infer from the idea of a perfect being its existence, as the concept of reality is different from reality itself. It is absurd to prove the existence of God from the idea of God; existence can never be the predicate of a judgment and can only be the subject. The moral postulate is admittedly not a proof and is a mere faith not justified by moral experience. The demand made by moral reason for the union of duty and happiness is mere wishful thinking based neither on reason nor on experience. A consistent rationalism logically leads to agnosticism and scepticism. A Berkeley is followed by a Hume in Western thought. In the same way Nyāya theism is rejected by Buddhistic agnosticism. Natural theology is a misnomer as it is neither reason nor faith, and it is impossible to apprehend the existence of God or comprehend His nature by its method. Traditionalism can never thrive in an atmosphere of free thought. The truths of theology cannot therefore be demonstrated by natural reason. They are articles of faith drawn from dogmatics. Theology is therefore revealed and not natural, and there is a deep cleavage between philosophy and dogma, the former being founded on sense-perception and reason and the latter, on a belief in the sacred truths of God. The religious dogmatist holds that the word of scripture is God. The Veda is the very breath of Brahman and is its own evidence. While in natural theology faith is justified by reason and philosophy proceeds from nature to divine nature, in revealed theology reason is subservient to faith and it proceeds from God to nature. An estrangement is thus effected between

reason and faith, and theology is withdrawn from the jurisdiction of philosophy and philosophy from the domain of faith. Faith and reason belong to different realms, and it is impossible to prove the existence of God by logical thinking. Mere reason is ill-founded and self-contradictory as is evidenced by the arguments advanced by the Buddha, Jina, Kanāḍa and Kapila. The history of philosophy reveals the barrenness of intellectual speculation, and its conclusions admit of no finality or conviction. The theologian maintains, therefore, that faith requires no proof as it is its own evidence. Free thought leads to atheism and is to be condemned as a heresy. The fight between philosophy and theology is then carried on on a higher level between intuitionism and revelationism.

Though the existence of God cannot be proved, He can be experienced by means of direct intuition. Intuition is said to be an immediate experience of God and to transcend the realms of sentient experience and reason. The logical intellect dissects reality and gives us only diagrams or abstractions and partial pictures. The categories of the understanding can explain only the phenomenal and not the absolute. But intuition transcends the level of instinct and intelligence and is a direct insight into God or atman and is ineffable and incommunicable. Atman is alogical and amoral and cannot be apprehended by discursive reason or attained by moral effort. The alogical and amoral is the fulfilment of logical and moral experience and is therefore not hostile to them. Visistādvaita accepts the Nyāya method of testing truth by means of the disciplined logical intellect and emancipating it from the fallacies incidental to the investigation of truth, but repudiates Nyāya theology and its materialistic idea of mukti. It also welcomes the Mīmāmsaka view of Vedic dharma and

insists on the authority of the moral consciousness; but it subordinates the imperative of duty to the philosophic need of immediately intuiting Brahman that is ever self-realised and not something to be accomplished. The *Vedavādin* who performs his duties should develop into the *Vedāntin* who seeks the Deity and intuits Him.

But theology does not favour this mystic philosophy as the mystic experience of Brahman is private, particular and arbitrary without any objective validity and has no faith in the infallibility of revelation or sāstra. Scripture is the word of God, not in the sense of a miraculous revelation or direct dictation of God, but in the sense that it is eternal and infallible. A literal faith in scriptural revelation is, according to the theologian, more important to religion than personal religion. Religion is essentially theo-centric and cannot be traced to personal experience. The proofs of God are meant either for the theist or for the atheist. The former is a believer who needs no proof and the latter is an unbeliever who rejects the proofs. Scripture is its own proof and every word of it is an eternal truth and should be considered as holy as a shrine of God. Philosophic explanation is admissible only if, like a handmaid, it is subservient to faith and justifies the truth of revelation deductively without resorting to the heretic method of historical and logical criticism. Faith is sanctified by tradition or sat sampradāya and is a heritage bequeathed to posterity in the form of divinely ordained truths. The main duty of the believer is submission to authority and loyalty to sampradāya or sacred tradition and the spiritual community. It is the essence of scholasticism that dogma as an article of faith should regulate life. Philosophy should learn to square with dogma and not conflict with it. Philosophy is read into faith, and conduct should conform to the will of God as expressed in the sacred tradition which is the final truth.

The warfare between faith and reason thus reaches its climax when intuition tries to oust faith in revelation and when faith tries to oust intuition. Authoritarianism fights intuitionism on the ground that it refers to mere subjective and private experience which can never be the same for all. It strengthens itself by alliance with the forces of verbalism, dogmatism and fanaticism. Intuitionism is anti-theological and is a spiritual quest for immediate religious experience, and it allies itself with mysticism. Another form of intuitionism rejects religion as a mere appearance of reality betraying the self-contradiction between man and God. Religion and its God disappear in the non-dual experience of oneness. But there cannot be a more solid reality than religious experience. The philosopher thinks that he alone enquires into the whole of experience and that religion is only an appearance of the whole. Religion condemns philosophy as mere theory and philosophy rejects religion as arbitrary and intuitional. No man can be a free thinker in philosophy and, at the same time, a believer in religion. The religious thinker should be consistent and have a reasonable religion or religious system. The esse of religion is not credo or belief and the esse of philosophy is not cogito or 'I think'. A true philosopher accepts the truths of religious faith. experiments with them and experiences them. The differentia of philosophy is the venture of the mumuksu to know reality, and that of religion is the realisation of reality as Brahman. A true philosophy of religion is thus neither a free rational speculation on the nature and value of reality nor is it a theology which has no faith in the

trustworthiness of the pramānas of sense-perception and reasoning.

The problem of Vedānta as the attempt to think out all things and discover their spiritual meaning and value is stated in a classical way in the Taittirīvobanisad in the dialogue between Varuna and his son Bhrgu. The problem is: "What is that from which these beings are born, by which they are sustained and into which they return?" Bhrgu, as the true son of a philosopher-mystic, seeks to understand the problem and solve it by a resolute spiritual effort and consecrated life. The true Vedāntin seeks to know the right way of framing questions and gradually recognises that Vedānta is not the obstinate questioning of outward things or mere resolute thinking, but is a spiritual quest or induction. Bhrgu attempts various definitions of Brahman as suggested by the teacher, like annamaya, prānamaya, manomaya and vijnanamaya, which have their parallels in western thought as materialism, vitalism, mentalism and rationalism. But none of these definitions satisfies him as they do not exhaust the nature of the Absolute. The hunger for the Absolute can be satisfied only by the Absolute. It is the perfect alone that is self-complete and supremely valuable. Bhrgu then realises that Brahman is anandamava, the intuitional Highest, and that this mystic experience of Brahman is the crown and consummation of knowledge.

Vedānta is thus an enquiry into the meaning of Brahman and is really a darsana. The term darsana adequately expresses the foundational truths of Vedānta as the philosophic knowledge of reality strengthened by viveka or discrimination and vairāgya or freedom from sense desires, as well as

the spiritual realisation of that knowledge. It is an organic integration of s'ruti or scripture, yukti or logic, and anubhava or intuitive experience, or, to put it in other words, the claims of revelational faith, rational enquiry and intuitive verifiability. A darsana is a body of eternal and impersonal spiritual truths enshrined in sruti which can be logically tested and verified by personal experience. S'ruti is self-valid and the self-explanation of existence in its wholeness and of experience in its integrity. The Vedāntic darsana affords insight into the nature of Brahman, and the ultimate proof of the existence of Brahman is the experience of Brahman. It is not tarka drsti or the natural light of reason and dialectic thinking on all things, but is tatva drsti or the soul-sight of Brahman by knowing which everything is known. The Upanisadic rsis were specialists in spirituality and were philosopher-seers. Reason mediates between objective revelation and intuitive realisation and corrects the dogmatic tendency of the former and the subjectivistic experiences of the latter. The truths of Brahmajñāna are out there in their absoluteness; but they are inductively discovered by intuitive insight and deductively deduced from the sruti. To the guru such jñāna is self-revelatory and deductive; but to the disciple it is a spiritual induction by self-criticism. Spiritual truths are spiritually discerned and experienced and they are. true for ever, and whatever is spiritually satisfactory is true. It is the aim of Visistādvaita as a philosophy of religion to reconcile the extremes of reason and faith by the sublime truth that Brahman is the ultimate explanation of the world of cit and acit or the sentient and the non-sentient, and the supreme end of spirituality and that outside Brahman there is no reality. The more the Jīva is spiritual the more Brahmanised it is. The sātvata religion of the Pāñcarātra is the word

of God promoting godliness and is therefore true. Pragmatically speaking, the divine experiences of the Alvārs have Vedāntic validity and value. Visiṣṭādvaita as a philosophy of religion reconciles revelation, reason and intuition, and claims to be universal and accepts whatever is coherent with its cardinal truths. It summons humanity to participate in the riches of Brahmānubhava or the experience of Brahman, and its spiritual hospitality knows no geographical or racial barriers.

## CHAPTER II

## RAMANUJA'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

THE central idea of Visistādvaita as a philosophy of religion is the integration and harmonisation of all knowledge obtained through sense-perception, inference and revelation. The key-thought of revelation is enshrined in the Upanisadie text 'Brahmavid āpnōti param' (He who knows Brahman attains the highest).' This text affirms the interrelated unity of the threefold system of Vedāntic wisdom known as tatva, hita and purusārtha, as elaborated in the four chapters of the Vedānta Sūtras. Tatvajñāna is the philosophic exposition of Brahman as the immanent ground of existence and the inner self of all things. Hita involves the determination of the moral and the spiritual means or sādhanas of realising Brahman and burusartha is the attainment of Brahman as the summum bonum of life by realising which everything is realised. To forget this interpretation is to take a false step in the philosophy of religion, leading to a blind alley. This is illustrated in the philosophy of Kant and The problem of philosophy as the criticism of S'ankara. knowledge is formulated in western thought by Kant in the classical form "What can I know, what ought I to do? and what may I hope for?" The Kantian solution lies in showing the impossibility of metaphysics being explained as rational

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Tait. Upan., II. i.

psychology, cosmology and theology. The transcendental ideas of the self, nature and God are transcendental illusions which have no constitutive use and are therefore deceptive. But ethics as practical reason needs the postulation of the ideas of God, freedom and immortality. This method has led to the opposition between reality and appearance and the impossibility of bridging the gulf between thought and reality. For example, the metaphysical theory of adhyāsa or erroneous predication held by Advaita brings out the self-contradictions of experience and reduces nature, self and God to mere appearances. But, on the practical side, it restores what was demolished by dialectics and accepts the pragmatic value of cit, acit and Isvara. In this way, there is a fissure in philosophy due to the antagonism between the pure reason of Advaita and its practical, ethical and religious side. What reason declares to be erroneous and deceptive is accepted as having relative truth because the world of practical life would be impossible without it. But Visistādvaita avoids this blind alley by accepting the trustworthiness of thought, and it is therefore a philosophy of affirmation and valuation. Its answer to the three questions is that Brahman is knowable as the supreme tatva. Hita is doing one's duty as Brahmārpaņa, and the purusārtha is the Brahmanisation of the self, whereby the self attains the eternal nature of Brahman. Philosophy is thus a criticism of knowledge and is a revolution in method, as it gathers up the divergent lines of thought and combines them in a new and synthetic way. All the currents of knowledge converge in Brahman, by knowing which everything is known. The first problem of philosophy is "What can I know?" It is the problem of the theory of knowledge, its origin and nature, and this chapter brings out the solution offered by Visistādvaita epistemology.

The problem of epistemology is the problem of the relation between knowledge and reality. It is stated thus: "What is the connection between the course of consciousness in the individual self and the world of persons and things which constitute the objective world par excellence and the all-self?" This question does not presuppose a radical distinction between rational psychology, cosmology and theology or the knowledge of the self, nature and God, as the three are inter-related. The world of knowledge has a unity sustained by the intelligent self which endures in all the levels of experience including the perceptual, the rational and the revelational sides. The first question in epistemology is about the origin and possibility of knowledge. Visistādvaita affirms the knowability of reality and says that we can know things as they are. In the perceptive judgment, which is the beginning and foundation of all knowledge as in the example "I see a rose," the self with its jñāna perceives the object 'rose' and does not passively receive the visual sensation. The knowledge presupposes a knowing self and an object of thought. It is ordinarily explained as an ascent from the sensation to the self. Sensations form the raw material of knowledge and they become percepts by means of the a priori form prescribed by the mind. The perceived objects are conceived and arranged by the synthetic mind or understanding. The mind or understanding brings together the perceived objects and forms judgments; without the unity of self-consciousness sensation cannot pass into perception and conception or judgment. Reason unifies the judgments, and is a higher principle than understanding and arrives at the idea of self, nature and God as the highest unity. In this way epistemology is said to start with sensation as the matter of knowledge and proceed through perception and conception to the self as the synthetic unity of knowledge. Visistādvaita, however, lays stress on the work of thought as a revelatory function. Knowledge is not a synthetic construction, but is purely a process by which things are revealed. The objects in nature are given and are not made by thought. It is the function of thought only to reveal them and not to create them. The Visistādvaita: theory of knowledge is thus different from western theories. According to it, jñāna, the attributive intelligence of the self, as contrasted with the antahkarana of the Advaita philosophy, can reveal both itself and the object outside it. In the act of perception, it streams out from the self towards the object and illumines it. Jñāna or knowledge starts from the ātman and, with the manas and the indrivas, comes into contact with the object (artha), assumes its form and thus reveals The knowledge of the object thus arises when  $j\tilde{n}\bar{a}na$ contacts the object through the inner and the outer senses.1 The theory has the merit of recognising the priority and the primal fact of consciousness or jñāna and the relative independence of the conscious self and the non-conscious object. The object is not a vrtti or idea or psychosis objectified by avidyā or nescience, nor is the subject the counterfeit self of ahankāra or egoism. Both are inter-dependent reals essential to knowledge. This view escapes the perils of materialism and mentalism, as it predicates the reality of the perceiving self and of the external world that is perceived.

The theory of perception adopted by Visisṭādvaita is neither mediaeval nor unscientific as it is sometimes said to be, but contains a profound truth which satisfies the demands of science and the claims of philosophic thought. Many of

¹ Yatındramatadıpika, I. 15.

the current theories of the origin of knowledge fail to give a satisfactory account of pratyaksa or sense-perception. Science is specialised knowledge of some aspect of reality, and its explanation is therefore fractional, fragmentary and abstract. In the judgment of sight perception, 'I see the rose', the physicist may trace the visual sensation to the light vibrations starting from the object and stimulating the eye, which is like a photographic camera, and to the formation of the visual image on the retina. The physiologist then refers to the response of the neurone to the external stimulus and also to the passage of the impulse to the visual area where it is resisted by the synapses, causing the flash of consciousness. The psychologist takes up the story and explains sensation as the report of the sensory stimulation in consciousness which gives us acquaintance with the object. Each sensation has its specific function on account of which the eye can only see the thing and the ear, hear the sound. The feel of a thing is different from its look. But the sense object is not the bare atomic sensation. A philosopher like Kapila or Kant goes a step further and traces the knowledge of the object to the synthetic unity of apperception that is in one's selfconsciousness. The exponent of each succeeding view thus begins where the other ends, with the result that there is no real explanation of the process by which the self knows the object 'rose'.

It is only by the synthetic co-ordination of the abstract truths of physics, physiology and psychology, genetic and rational, that the concrete experience as such can be explained. The *Visiṣṭādvaitic* theory of knowledge avoids the perils of the analytic method by stating the simple fact that the self with its *jñāna* knows the object which

is relatively external to it. The self seeks to know the external object through the channels of the senses as a whole, just as white light is perceived as a whole in spite of its separate spectral colours. This synthetic view is thus the criticism and completion of the conclusions of the special sciences like physics, physiology and psychology. Knowledgeis the self-revelation of the real object as a whole and is not a piecing together or juxtaposition of the a priori or the rational with the a bosteriori or the empirical. It is neither an ascent from the particulars of sense to a pervading identity nor a descent from the universal to the concrete facts. The object is not the copy of the idea nor is the idea the archetype of the object, and neither is deduced from the other. To say that the mind or its vitti or form creates the object and takes its form is to take no account of the object at all. The object is not a not-self made of avidyā opposed to the self but a real thing in terra firma, and it includes other selves also as social objects. The world of physical objects is for consciousness and not in consciousness. Objects have an existence independent of consciousness. The subject can realise itself as the eternal self-conscious atman different from the object. How does the subjective consciousness then perceive the object that is outside it and different from it? The answer of Visistādvaita may be stated as follows: The ultimate explanation of the subject-object relation is afforded by the religious insight that the real subject of every judgment is Brahman that is in all things not as a tertium quid but as their inner self. When I say "I think," it really means "Brahman thinks in me as my self." Brahman as infinite intelligence is the prius and presupposition of finite thought and has more affinity with it than with external things.

## THE NATURE OF DHARMABHŪTAJÑĀNA

The concept of dharmabhūtajñāna or attributive knowledge is the foundational truth of the Visistādvaita theory of knowledge as it alone throws light on the nature of reality, and the idea is well expounded in the Yatīndramatadīpikā (Ch. VII). It alone furnishes the meaning of the three ultimate facts of cosmic consciousness, self-consciousness and Brahmanconsciousness. Consciousness cannot be aware of itself, but presupposes a self of which it is the idea or attribute. Iñāna is not identical with reality or the self; the two are separate but are not separable. If being and knowing are identical, the theory of knowledge or epistemology is identical with the theory of being or ontology, and there is no need for the theorising activity at all. If what is is in itself, then there is no 'ism' as a metaphysical explanation of what is. The other alternative that knowing is entirely unrelated to being is equally inadmissible as it would land us in scepticism. If there is a selfdiscrepancy between thought as 'what' and reality as 'that', thought can never grasp reality or get merged in it. The neti method, or method of negation, that consists in abstracting pure consciousness from its quality of consciousness is a denial of consciousness itself. The true neti method has nothing to do with doubting knowledge and denying it. It is a false step in monistic philosophy to start with doubt and end with denial. The monist answers the question of how the conscious subject within can perceive what is external to it by denying the reality of an external object and declaring the percept as a false appearance projected by the mind, which is itself unreal. This view is also allied to scepticism. It stultifies itself and is sterile. The act of denial at least exists as an act. If it is regarded as an illusion, the illusion exists as a

fact and if it is causally explained, it leads to the fallacy of infinite regress. It is difficult for the monist to explain how the illusion arises. If it is explained as the result or effect of a cause like avidyā, the origin of this avidyā crops up for explanation. Even the statement that nothing exists assumes the conceivability of something which it denies. Thought constitutes reality as its inner quality and is not super-added to, or super-posed on, it. The fact that something exists affirms a quality of that something. What is has a quality apart from its existence. Since a quality cannot exist by itself and be its own predicate, it presupposes a substance of which it is a quality. A substance has a quality and is not a quality or aggregate of qualities. If monism affirms mere being or substance and denies its having qualities, or in other words, predication and determination, it is combated by phenomenalism (like that of Buddhism) which admits qualities and denies substance. Even monism is constrained to concede the truth of substance and qualities when it refers to the āsraya or adhistāna as the locus of illusion. Dharma or quality presupposes dharmin, the substance, and dharmin presupposes dharma; the denial of the one is the denial of the other, and such denial is opposed to all pramanas or instruments of knowledge. When substance is svaprakāsa or selfillumined, it is called ajada and is different from jada like the world of space and time. Ajada is consciousness with content classified into pratyak or conscious self existing by itself and its knowledge or parāk (existing for another) which is its essential quality or dharmabhūtajñāna. Substance as ajada or the immaterial is thus conceived as a conscious self, finite or infinite. It is the subject of experience that has jñāna as its inseparable attribute. Ātman is and has consciousness. It is substantive intelligence and has

attributive intelligence as well, which manifests its nature. The two can be logically distinguished but cannot be divided.

Dharmabhūtajñāna is self-illumined (svayam prakāsa) and it also illumines objects (artha brakāsaka). It is also called mati, prajñā, s'emuṣī and samvit. It can reveal itself and the objects, but it is only revelatory and is not self-realised like the ātman. It is midway between cetana and jada, as it manifests itself and objects like cetana and is for another like acetana. It is like physical light which can only "show but cannot know"; and it exists in the self and is sustained by its intelligence. The relation between the atman and its iñana is like that between light and its luminosity. The self is a knowing subject and is not mere intelligence. Nor is it true to say that intelligence is an adventitious quality or creation of ajñāna or ignorance. Jñāna is self-originated and sui generis and self-valid. We can think away all things, but we cannot think away thought or iñana. In affirming the 'I' in the judgment 'I am conscious,' consciousness is predicated of the self that is affirmed, but it does not imply the identity of being and knowing. The self that exists and is conscious is not mere consciousness. Jñāna explains itself and things and it is an act of inner necessity. It is the idea that has concourse with the thing and makes the world of nature intelligible and imparts meaning and value to buddhi and other mental states which are the modifications of iñana and not its creations. Reason and understanding, perception and sensation are illumined and explained by jñāna, but jñāna is self-explanatory. Jñāna functions in the empirical states

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hiriyanna's article on Rāmānuja's Theory of Knowledge in the Proceedings of the Indian Philosophical Congress, 1925.

through the medium of manas or the auxiliary cause and is often identified with it as a matter of convention (upacāra). All states of consciousness ranging from the lowest instinct to the highest state of bhakti, including viveka (discrimination), pratyakṣa (perception), anumāna (inference), and s'abda (scriptural faith) are only modifications or avasthas of jñāna. The knowledge of things in the external world is explained by the object-revealing character of jñāna. In the empirical or samsāra state of the jīva, jñāna radiates from the centre and illumines the objects through the medium of the senses. The distinction drawn by some western objective idealists between idea in the psychological sense of a perishing psychical presentation and idea in the logical sense of reference to reality is artificial, since jñāna is as real as the object known and since there is no barrier between the subjective and the objective. The object is not a mental construction or creation or shadow of the idea, nor is the idea a faint copy or duplicate of the object as jñāna is both svayam þrakāsa or capable of illumining itself and artha prakās aka or capable of illumining objects. If modern psychology has to retrace its steps and find its solution in metaphysics, it will receive a flood of light from the Visistādvaitic truth of the self and its consciousness. The view that the self-consciousness of the self is the source of all mental states and that it is its nature to reveal external objects has the merit of simplicity which is a true test of truth and affords a basis for the reconciliation of the claims of realism and idealism. Sensation has a metaphysical foundation in the self and the self itself has its meaning and value in its inner Self. Visistādvaita prefers the method of tracing psychology to metaphysics and religion to the reverse process of deriving religion and metaphysics from psychology.

The self is cidrūpa or of the nature of consciousness and has caitanya or consciousness for its essential quality. While the finite self is anu or monadic and infinitesimal in nature, its consciousness is vibhu or all-pervasive and infinite. The self abides in its own monadic being, but has windows and its consciousness has no limitations as it can mirror the whole universe as its content. During the phenomenal state of samsāra, jñāna is causally determined by the moral law of avidyā-karma and is limited in the embodied state. Consciousness which is capable of becoming infinite is spatialised, cribbed and confined and it is this finitised existence of jñāna that accounts for the difference in the states of the jīva from the butterfly to Brahmā. In the noumenal state of mukti, jñāna is infinite consciousness and is all-pervasive. It is then freed from the contractions due to karma. It is co-eval with cosmic consciousness and God-consciousness. While the self is immutable and eternal and abides in its own being, its consciousness changes. But it endures through time and persists even in dreamless sleep, swoon or senselessness as is evidenced by the experience 'I slept well.' In sleep the revelatory nature of jñāna is overpowered by tamas, but is not absent. Its nonexperience during sleep is no argument to prove its non-existence and the fact of memory refutes the so-called antecedent non-existence of jñāna. The self persists in its subjective modification as a pervading identity and while it illumines other objects it is not illumined by them. Besides, the three states of consciousness are continuous and are not self-contradictory. It is meaningless to explain youth as the contradiction of childhood and as sublated by manhood. The three are different phases of a single life having the same biological end and not the three discrepant unreals of monistic logic. Even monism admits the co-existence of the self as sāksin and the

antahkarana persists as a possibility in the so-called non-dual experience of sleep. Jñāna is there, but its light is hidden and is not known and the sāksin in sleep is a witness of something. A witness that witnesses nothing is s'ūnya and serves no purpose. Consciousness is continuous, distinct and clear in the waking state, dim and confused in the sub-conscious and dream states, and divine in mukti. It is implied in sleep and stupor, and even in the abnormal states of dispersal and dissociation of personality. The differences are to be accounted for psychologically as the changing states of the same self and its consciousness because of its being affected by avidyā-karma. The unmanifest state of inana is not ajnana or illusion but jñāna as essence or real possibility. When the confusions of avidyā and the contractions of karma are removed, jñāna wakes to itself, expands and shines again in its infinite and eternal splendour and the monadic self radiates its light everywhere besides mirroring forth the universe from its own point of view. Then perceptual and inferential knowledge expands into full integral experience. The jīva as the bare monad of matter can become the pure monad freed from it and the vogin can evolve into the *Isvara* state of having cosmic consciousness. The  $i\bar{n}\bar{a}na$  of  $\bar{l}svara$ , unlike that of the bound  $i\bar{v}va$ , is ever allpervasive (nitya and vibhu). The idea of the finite self with infinite consciousness as its essential and eternal nature is not inconceivable. Even absolutism is constrained psychologically to posit the existence of an infinity of finite selves or nānā jīva. The Visistādvaita theory of jñāna has the merit of recognising the reality of the finite and the infinite and reconciling the claims of pluralism and monism. The infinite pervades the finite and removes its exclusive feeling of individualism. By knowing the one we know the other and the intelligence of the jīva, finite and infinite has its home in the absolute intelligence of Brahman. Thus the theory of intelligence being both finite and infinite and changing and changeless is not really self-contradictory or paradoxical, for it alone bridges the gulf between the moveless infinite and the changing consciousness. If the infinite is infinite and the finite is finite, knowledge would become impossible. But the theory of dharmabhūtajñāna sacrifices neither the finite nor the infinite as it mediates between the two and traces spiritual consciousness to its headquarters in Brahman.

Dharmabhūtajñāna not only illuminates itself and the objects of nature but is also substance-attribute (dravya-guna). It has already been analogically explained by comparison with light. Light or prabhā, as in sun light or lamp light, illumines objects and is a quality inhering in a substance. At the same time, as the substratum of colour and the shades of colouration, it is a substance. Likewise the term jñāna expresses an essential and eternal attribute that inheres in the self; but as it contracts and expands like a substance owing to the determining influence of karma, it is the substratum of change and may be defined as a substance as well. Eternal consciousness changes when it is caught up in the world of karma, but comes to itself in the state of mukti when it is freed from sense contact. Jñāna is thus both changing and changeless and is both substance and quality. It is thus the peculiar spiritual quality of the ātman and is contrasted with the qualities of objects or their secondary sensations. Dharmabhūtajñāna is said to be, like the infinite mode of Spinoza, a link between the changeless state of reality and the changing phenomenal states. Jñāna is one though it realises itself in various mental modifications starting with the animal instincts and ending with the divine impulse of bhakti. Jñāna functions as conation and feeling and therefore every state of consciousness is cognitive, conative and affective. It contains within itself the principle of self-differentiation and selfactivity. Jñāna is not thought which is abstract and moveless or a self-identical blank, but is a mode of thinking with infinite variations. It is not the sum of mental processes, nor an identity that pervades the differences, but is the self-same consciousness that exhibits itself, owing to the influence of avidyā-karma as particular perishing present-Thus it is not, strictly speaking, like Spinoza's infinite modes, a device to bridge the gap between the infinite that is indeterminate and the finite modes. It is equally futile to reduce jñāna to the level of jadatva or inertness and ajñāna on the ground that whatever knowledge belongs to anātman or non-self is objectified thought or ajñāna. This view of jadatva cuts at the root of the theory of knowledge and is like saying that one's own mother is a barren woman. Jñāna is the mother of metaphysics and if it becomes aiñāna it is sterile. Cit and caitanya are, like light and its luminosity, inseparable though distinguishable. If knowledge veils the self, the desire for mukti and for knowing the self would only be a make-believe and scepticism would be the only conclusion.

# THE THEORY OF JUDGMENT

Every judgment is the affirmation of reality and not the apprehension of identity devoid of content or differentiation. For example, when we say "this tree is green", the predicate, viz., the idea of greenness, is attributed to the subject 'tree' which is given in sense-perception. In other words, the new idea qualifies and amplifies the meaning of the subject. If, on

the other hand, the subject and the predicate are identical, there is no knowledge at all. Thought qualifies reality and presupposes the distinction between the subject and the object of the judgment. Judgment as an act of predication is the fundamental principle of philosophic logic and the two elements of subject and predicate are integrally united and not isolated bits or opposites. If thought is identical with reality, the judging process is tautological and is needless. But if thought is opposed to reality and cannot reach it, it is shipwrecked in the very entrance to the harbour of knowledge and is therefore useless. The only way of solving the problem lies in the affirmation that reality is knowable by thought on account of the inseparable relation and of the logical faith in the reality of predication as a subject-object relation. Reality is therefore savisesa or determinate and not nirvisesa or indeterminate. A nirvis'esa vastu is a self-contradiction. Consciousness abstracted from the knowing self or the subject and the object is inconceivable and non-existent. If consciousness as such is self-proved, it has at least the quality of being self-proved. If it is permissible to argue that pure consciousness remains identical with itself when jñāna dispels ajñāna and destroys itself, it is equally justifiable to say that self-consciousness cannot be sublated and the self remains as an eternal subject and cannot have antecedent or consequent non-existence. Judgment is the unity which explains the different elements. It does not explain them away. The two are correlated and distinguishable elements of knowledge. Determination is not negation, but negation is determination and acquires positive meaning in a judgment by defining its nature, and it presupposes self-determination. Substance as an entity would be an empty abstraction if it is devoid of content. Substance is not the mere aggregate of attributes, but is their organic unity

and underlying reality. The distinction between indeterminate and determinate perception (nirvikalpaka and savikalpaka) is not a difference in kind between the undifferentiated, which is devoid of difference, and the differentiated. Both are complex presentations. Knowledge, even primitive sensation, is significant and is in the form of judgment. It is a development of the objective. The indefinite becomes the definite and clear. The substantive-quality relation is implicit in the former and explicit in the latter. If the first is bare identity, it is non-relational and no amount of subsequent knowledge can introduce difference into it. But, as a matter of fact, the first called brathama binda grahana is the absence not of difference and discrimination altogether but of some specific difference as "this is such" and is articulate, and the second called dvitīva binda grahaņa is the extension to what is already affirmed of the generic character of a class. The first judgment "this is a cow" is indefinite but not indeterminate; the second "this is also a cow" is revival based on similarity of structure, and both are savisesa and not nirvisesa. Every judgment is in the form "this is such" in which the predicate qualifies the subject. There is no boundary line between what is given and its extension. What is immediate knowledge is, by its own necessity, mediated. We give a reason for what is immediately felt. When we say that there is a fire, we try to give a reason for the assertion. In every judgment extent and intent go together. The Naiyāyika says that sāmānya or generality is out there as a distinct category; but it is not true, as such a general idea is a mere abstraction. The jāti or genus is realised in the vyakti or individual owing to the intimate structural

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Vedartha Sangraha (edited by S. Vasudevachariar), p. 94, and S. B. E., Vol. XLVIII, p. 41.

similarity of pattern or samsthāna. Therefore sāmānya or genus is practically the same as samsthāna and is structured. Thus there is no contradiction between savikalpaka and nirvikalpaka jñāna. Two different things are contradictory only when they stand in the same relation to the same subject. But different qualities like whiteness and redness may co-exist in the same object cow. To say that there is being as such without any quality is the result of progressive abstraction. It is wrong to say that the first perception is a knowledge of pure being or nirviseṣa cinmātra. A pure sensation as such is psychologically impossible.

Even in a perceptive judgment like "this is a jar," the factors of knowledge can be distinguished and they are all equally real though their values may differ. The perceived object in its presentness is a given spot in the world of spacetime which is in sensuous contact with the percipient subject or sensitive self. It comes into contact with a particular spot which is only a this-now. The judging activity belongs to iñana which illumines the mental world and the world of nature and in this case it directly reveals the external object which is the illuminated spot or focus of attention. The sensitive self is the spiritual ātman different from the body, the senses, manas and jñāna. The ātman is self-revelatory as well as self-realised and is the subject of every kind of knowledge; but the ultimate subject of knowledge is the inner self of all thinking beings and objects of thought which is their prius and presupposition. Thus the logical subject is iñāna, the philosophical subject is the atman or dharmin behind the dharma, and the subject of the religious consciousness is the Paramatman which is the whole reality that enters into the ātman as its self and then enters into the world of nature as its source and centre. Therefore every term, thought and thing ultimately connotes Brahman on account of its all-pervasive character. This is only from the connotative point of view, as Brahman, cit or kṣetrajña, and acit or kṣetra are ultimate reals and are therefore different denotatively.

The grammatical subject of a sentence is distinguished from the logical subject of the proposition. The grammatical subject also refers to reality qualified by difference in the light of the grammatical principle of the co-ordination of words in a sentence or sāmānādhikaranya. It conveys the idea of one thing being qualified by several attributes.1 The words denote the same thing but connote its different qualities. It is the application to one thing of several words, for the application of each of which there is a different purpose. In the sentence "this is a tree". the terms 'this' and 'tree' standing for a vyakti or individual and a jāti or class respectively have different functions (bhinna-pravrtti-nimitta); but they refer to the same thing. In the sentence "this is green", the guna 'greenness' in the guni 'this' refers to the same subject of discourse. Contradictories cannot co-exist at the same time and in the same context. But distincts may co-exist side by side as different qualities of the same object. The judgment "this person is that Devadatta" connotes the same entity existing in two different contexts and not absolute identity or non-difference. A sentence construed as a connected idea referring to reality is called a judgment and the above sentence explicitly refers to personal identity and means that Devadattatva in a particular former context belongs to him in the present context. The Advaitic interpretation of the theory of

¹ bhinna pravṛtti nimittanam s'abdanam ekasmin arthe vṛttissamanadhi-karanyamiti hi tadvidaḥ.—Vedartha Sangraha, p. 80; samanadhikaranyam hi dvayoḥ padayoḥ prakaradvaya-mukhena ekartha-niṣṭhatvam. Ibid, p. 189.

sāmānādhikaranya in terms of absolute identity is untenable as the implied affirmation of such identity cuts at the very root of grammatical construction. To speak of bare identity as the implied sense or laksya as opposed to the apparent sense or mukhya-vrtti really implies nothing and applies to nothing. Likewise the interpretation of the principle in terms of difference between subject and predicate as mere otherness has no meaning. Identity in difference is also impossible as the two are self-contradictory. The principle of co-ordination is ultimately the relation between prakāra and prakārin. In the sentence "the cow is white", whiteness depends for its meaning on the subject with which it is inseparably related as aprthaksiddhavisesana and the quality is therefore termed the prakāra or mode of the substance or prakārin. Likewise the sentence "he is Devadatta, a god" or "Yajñadatta a man" implies that the body is a mode or prakāra of the self which animates it. Therefore the term connoting the body connotes also the self, and ultimately, all terms referring to things and thinking beings are used in co-ordination with their inner self or Brahman, and therefore extend their meaning up to the self, which is their prakarin. Every kind of knowledge, perceptive, inferential or scriptural, refers to the ultimate knower or subject. Atman and atman alone is the inner meaning of all experience.

#### THE THEORY OF RELATIONS

Philosophical logic is thus based on the truths of determinate knowledge or saviseṣa jñāna and the principle of sāmānādhikaranya, and it throws light on the problem of external and internal relations. In the theory of external relations, the relations are said to make no difference to the terms related. The relata are external to the relation and one

substance does not pass into and become another. What exists is alone cognised. Knowledge is the awareness of external objects by the knowing subject, and such experience makes no difference to the existing objects. The external objects are given not as things but as objects to a subject and they form the ksetra. They do not depend on the self or ksetrajña for their existence. Cit, the percipient self, and acit, the perceived object, are externally connected, mutually exclusive and eternally real. Knowledge presupposes not only the independence of the subject and the object but also the existence of a plurality of knowing subjects and knowable objects. The self is not always the subject of knowledge, as, in social relations, each self is both subject and object. Inter-subjective intercourse and social love would be impossible if there is no subject-object relation among different persons and even the non-dualistic theory of nānā-jīva would be demolished if the existence of a spiritual society of interacting individuals is denied. The view that the relata are external to the relation is, however, self-contradictory and makes knowledge impossible. If the object is out there, outside the mind, it cannot be known, and if the subject is inside, it is shut up in itself. Thus there is no way of escape from scepticism on the one hand and subjectivism on the other. To avoid these fatal pitfalls, the theory of external relations and epistemological realism is to be restated in terms of the logic of aprthaksiddhaviseşana or inseparable attribute and the theory of ontological nondualism. For example, the relation between the hand and the pen is external, while that between the hand and the fingers is internal and organic. Externality implies the reality of the eternal differences of the facts of cit and acit; but in relation to the whole which is their inner meaning, they become

inseparable and correlative factors and lose their independence and exclusiveness. Thus the plurality of cit and acit is accepted, but the pluralistic view is rejected. The cosmos is not subject or object, but is subject-object and it is appropriately defined as universe and not multiverse. As parts cit and acit are mutually exclusive and indifferent; but, as parts of the all-pervasive consciousness of the inner self which sustains them, they are internally and organically related. Qualities and relations depend on the whole of reality as their background. Internal relations are grounded in the nature of the terms related not as separate terms as such, but as terms connoting the ultimate ground of existence and experience as visista and visesya. The visesana is an attribute of the vis'esya or adjective of the whole and is vitally related to it as its mode or prakāra, like the fragrance of the flower, the vowel related to the consonant and the body and its self. The visista is thus not a mechanical whole of indifferent parts, nor the totality of attributes. The judgment "the lotus is fragrant" is not a unity of the substance and its quality or the subject-object relation as explained by the bhedābheda theory of identity in difference which regards identity and difference as two moments of reality. In its philosophic aspect, this view expounds reality as the absolute consisting of God and the finite centres. Visistādvaita, however, holds that the absolute is not God and the finite beings, but is God in the finite beings as their sustaining ground. While the visesya or prakārin is one, the visesanas or brakāras are many. Brahman and the world should be really Brahman in the world and are not two but one. The mathematical view of addition is opposed to the metaphysical view of Visistādvaita. The latter is likewise different from the adjectival theory of the absolute which explains the finite



self as the essential quality of the infinite and its connection of content and renders the term Visistādvaita as qualified or modified monism. The finite self is an inseparable attribute of the infinite as its abrthaksiddhavisesana or prakāra but is, at the same time, a separate self persevering in its own being. The visesana is both substance and quality or dravya guna like light and its radiation. As quality or mode, it derives its substantiality from the self-effulgent atman, but as substance it has its own monadic being. A quality is a quality of a substance: but when it is also a substance it admits of relation. The connection between atman and Paramatman is thus not merely the logical view of substance and attribute but the spiritual view of two selves and these two are eternally existent. They are not externally related as Paramatman is defined as the inner self and meaning of the jīva, or its antaryāmin. This view has the merit of avoiding the defects of the monadic exclusiveness of Leibnitz and the modal inclusiveness of Spinoza. Real exclusiveness and ideal inclusiveness are incompatible, and the Visistādvaita insight into Brahman as the antaryāmin throws a flood of light even on logical problems and provides an all-comprehensive view of reality. The self and the objects in nature are independent entities existentially and are externally related; but, as they have their meaning and value in the absolute as the all-self, they are related to it internally as its modes or brakaras. The absolute is self-related and has its own inner identity; but at the same time it is related to cit and acit which are its prakāras or modes. This interpretation avoids the fallacies of scepticism and of infinite regress.

The Visiṣṭādvaitic theory of knowledge may be summed up as a theory of the knowability of reality in all its levels

and aspects and the acceptance of what is valuable in other systems in so far as they do not contradict its main truths. It cannot be defined as realistic or idealistic in the western sense of the term, as manas in Vedāntic psychology along with buddhi and ahankāra is a part of prakrti or matter, and the body or kṣetra is distinguished from the ātman with its jñāna» which is called kṣetrajña. When Rāmānuja says that all knowledge is of the real (sarvam vijnāna jātam yathārtham)1, he does not accept the realistic contention that knowledge comes from the external object through the sense organs and the mind passively receives the sense impressions like a blank sheet of paper. The self with its  $j\tilde{n}\tilde{a}na$  and its psycho-physical changes is as real as the external object or prakrti with its twenty-three tatvas. Knowledge is revelatory and not representative. Since what exists is alone cognised, Rāmānuja's view is called sat khyāti or yathārtha khyāti.2 Realism is justified in its conclusion that the existence of a thing is independent of our experience of it and that there is an external relation between an object and its awareness by the self. The thought of an object is not the object but is about it. A thing is known as it exists and it is wrong to say that it exists because it is known. Nature exists for consciousness and not in consciousness as its idea. But if realism as a philosophy insists on the primacy and priority of matter over the self as in western thought and rules out the work and worth of jñāna, it leans towards pan-objectivism and lapsesinto materialism. Idealism is justified if it accepts dharmabhūtajñāna as the presupposition of experience; but it is to be refuted if it ignores the reality of the external object given in

<sup>1</sup> Srī Bhāṣya, I. i. 1, p. 87 (Ananda Press Edition).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The other views known as akhyāti, ātmakhyāti and anirvacaniya-khyāti are not accepted by him.

sense-perception and explains it as a mental state or construction based on relations, internal or relevant. If esse is percipi or cogitare, then the object is the idea and the idea is the object, and idealism becomes subjectivism. If the internal relation alone is accepted, then space, time and causality are a priori forms belonging to the very structure of thought super-imposed on the manifold of sense. The world, according to this view, seems to be real and is not real. Then there would be no difference between waking and dream consciousness and what we know is what we seem to know and it is only an as if. Then thought cannot grasp reality and the theory of knowledge is the theory of no knowledge. S'ankara is well aware of the defects of extreme idealism and its Buddhistic leanings and affiliations and combats it by admitting the realistic view that the external object is not an idea or a projection of thought but has objective reality and that the waking state is different in kind from the dream state. No Vedāntin accepts the atomic idealism and nihilism of Buddhistic epistemology. Visistādvaitic absolutism checks the extremes of realism and idealism and points out the defects of the pure object philosophy and the pure subject philosophy by insisting on the reality of ksetrajña or the knowing subject and the ksetra or the knowable object, the correlativity of the subject-object relation and the immanence of the supersubject or ātman in cit and acit. Ātman enters into cit as itself and enters into the object and then becomes the self of the self. In the five factors of knowledge analysed already if the object alone is taken as the real, then there arises the realistic view ending in materialism; if manas and buddhi constitute reality, there is mentalism and rationalism; if the self alone exists, it is monadism or personalism; and if Brahman alone exists, it is acosmism. But Visistādvaita

accepts all these existents, assigns a place and value to each of them and with its synthetic insight explains all selves and objects of knowledge as the living embodiments of the inner self. It thus affirms the duality of the subject-object relation within the unity of experience between the experient and the thing experienced, but denies their dualism. It relies on the eternity of cit and acit as bhōkta or the experient and bhōgya or the experienced, but abolishes their externality.

## THE VIS'IŞTĀDVAITIC THEORY OF TRUTH

Visistādvaita as a synoptic philosophy accepts the integrity of experience in all its levels as given in pratyaksa (perception), anumana (inference), and sastra (scripture), on the ground that  $j\tilde{n}\bar{a}na$  is self-valid and true, that the sat or the real alone is cognised and that there is no knowledge of asat or the unreal. If Brahman alone is real or satya and the world of experience is futile, false and non-existent (tuccha and mithva on account of the self-contradictions of dualistic knowledge, no knowledge is possible or desirable. Meticulous monistic logic cannot admit the co-existence of Brahman and māyā or different degrees of reality. Māyā is non-existence and cannot therefore co-exist with Brahman. If māvā refers to the world of illusion, then it contradicts the theory of degrees of reality and the truth of two standpoints as the vyāvahārika (or of the world of practical life) and the pāramārthika which is absolutely real. If truth is self-existent and the false non-existent, there is no need for a theory of truth or a test of truth based on abadha or non-contradiction. Absolutism does recognise the distinction between reality and existence but this distinction is not an opposition. To Rāmānuja, Brahman is the sat or supreme reality that is the

pervading essence of the universe and its indwelling self and is therefore satva or true. The universe is not Brahman enveloped by māvā and avidvā, but is Brahmamaya or pervaded by Brahman. It is illumined by its radiant light. It exists in Brahman and not as Brahman, and does not exhaust its content. Reality exists as Brahman in cit and acit. Acit is matter which is ever-changing and perishing and may be called asatya. Cit is the eternal self with a uniform nature or intelligence which is realised as distinct from the perishing prakrti or matter, and may be called satya or the true and the inner self of the existent prakrti; Brahman may be called satyasva satyam, the real of all reals or the true of the true. or Vāsudeva. Reality and value co-exist and while matter has an extrinsic and ephemeral value and is asatya, the self has intrinsic value and is satya. Brahman is the true of the true and gives value to both. This view repudiates realism, idealism and monism as one-sided and abstract and recognises the reality and value of nature, the individual self and Brahman.

Truth is the knowledge of a thing as it is and as it works or satisfies the practical interests of life. This definition is clear and distinct and is free from the defects of samsaya and viparyaya which arise from want of logical and moral discipline. The first is doubt as in the example "Is this a post or a person?" and the second is mistaking one thing for another as in the rope-snake illusion. According to Rāmānuja, every kind of knowledge is true if it is consistent with experience in its exactitude, and he accepts the trustworthiness of the three pramānās, viz., (1) pratyakṣa including abhāva, (2) anumāna including upamāna and arthāpatti and (3) sābda.

¹ yathāvasthitavyavahārānuguņam jñānam pramā. (Y. D., I. 9)

In bratvaksa, the indriva in its normal state has a direct knowledge of the thing as it is. Anumana arises from the knowledge of vyāpti or the invariable concomitance between cause and effect. The inference need not consist of the five members in all cases. Reasoning is both deductive and inductive and it should be free from prejudice and lead to truth. It should avoid fallacies like contradiction (viruddha), circular reasoning (anyōnyāsraya) and infinite regress (anavasthā). S'ruti, as verbal testimony, is eternal, impersonal and true and all its parts are inter-connected and have a unity of import. All the three pramānās are coherent and they are not contradictory. Pratyaksa is the foundation of knowledge and reasoning is based on it and does not supersede it. S'ruti is the consummation of all knowledge, but it cannot be at variance with pratyaksa1. Truth is an immanent criterion and includes the more of itself and the three pramānās in their integral unity and perfection enable the truthseeker to know the whole of reality.

### THE THEORY OF ERROR

Since truth is revelatory or svatalprāmānya<sup>2</sup> and every cognition is real, strictly speaking, there is no need for a theory of truth, and a theory of error is meaningless. Truth is the natural and normal feature of knowledge in the state of spiritual freedom, where there is no distinction between pramā and bhrama or truth and error. While the  $j\tilde{n}ana$  of the allself is eternally pure and perfect and free from the confusion of avidyā, the intelligence of the finite self is subject to the self-contradictions and contractions of avidyā-karma which deprive

¹ s'āstrasya pratyakṣeṇa virōdhe sati durbalatvāt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Yatindramata Dipikā, I. 17.

it of its pure and all-pervasive character and this privation is called error. Jñāna is normally true cognition and even a false cognition like the bent stick is perspective and is real. Its extent and variety are determined by the logical and moral development of the self. If error is traced to the fissure between knowing and being and the self-contradictions of relational experience and if avidyā is the obscuring principle of reality, we can never go from degrees of truth to the absolute, and the absolute would itself be infected by illusion. The Advaitic theory of non-contradiction is no theory at all, as it says that error is abhava or non-existent and reality is beyond bramā and bhrama. The merit of Rāmānuja's theory of error consists in saving the absolute from its self-deceptive māyā or avidyā and its illogical appearances and in attributing error to the finite self which has inexplicably allowed itself to be obscured by avidyā. Every empirical experience is incomplete or partial knowledge and even pramā is only partial truth. The distinction between prama and bhrama is only one of degree and vanishes when jñāna is freed from the moral determinations of karma. Visistādvaita utilises every theory of error which fits in with its central idea and accepts the tests of pragmatism and realism so far as they go in harmonising experience. The experience of an object as having gray colour owing to colour blindness is a psychic fact and is real. The shade of coloration is an aspect of the whole spatial order. The criterion of truth comprises the three theories of coherence, correspondence and workability in so far as they conform to the method of Visistādvaita. There is coherence if the given judgment is consistent with all other judgments and with the whole of knowledge. There is correspondence if there is exact conformity between the object as it is and its perception by the senses. Knowledge is true if it satisfies the ends of life by its workability. In this way it may be shown that correspondence follows from coherence and verification results from the inner value of truth. Thus pragmatism, realism and idealism are all inter-related in *Visiṣṭādvaitic* epistemology.

Falsity is abnormal and pathological as in mental disorders, and each case has to be judged on its own merits. Though error is too chaotic for classification, it may be grouped into certain types, like hallucinations, illusions and dreams which may be explained psychologically and by the criteria furnished by pragmatism and realism. In hallucination, an object is known to be physically present though there is no such object. An illusion is an erroneous perception in which one thing is mistaken for another. The dreamer seems to experience things which do not exist in the objective world. These abnormal phenomena are explained by the psychologist in terms of peripheral and interpretative factors and psycho-physical disorders; and all these are psychic occurrences and manifestations of jñāna that subsist and are facts of experience which cannot be dismissed as non-existent. The cause is real and therefore the effect also is real. The illusion of the double moon, of the white conch seen as vellow and of the firebrand seen as a continuous circle of light when whirled round are respectively traceable to the distorting medium. neural disorder, and the law of rapid rotation. In the first case, the illusion arises from some defect of the eye or the pressure of the finger on it. In the second case, the vellowness of the diseased eyeball is actually transmitted to the conch. One colour of the spectrum is abstracted from the whole, and the experience is purely subjective. In the third example, successiveness is omitted and simultaneity alone is felt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B.E., Vol. XLVIII, p. 123.

But if these mental states do not serve an end and satisfy the needs of practical life (vyavahāra anuguna), they are false. In the mirage experience, for example, the water element that is seen is alone apprehended owing to some defect in the eye. and the experience is not verified. Truth is selective and serviceable and, as it promotes the ends of life, it has a pragmatic value. Logic is related to psychology and it explains thought as a thinking process, and truth as a practical value. Truth is thus what works, but whatever works is not true. Truth is prior to its workability and it is not only vyavahāra anuguna but also yathartha and has both conative and cognitive value. A judgment is true if the idea corresponds to the external object. It is objective in the sense that truth is true for all and is not personal and private. In accounting for illusions like the cognition of silver in the shell, and the snake in the rope, Rāmānuja accepts the fundamental unity of nature or prakrti as composed of the five elements and the thinghood of things singled out in the act of sense-perception and defines truth as the apprehension of the dominant and relevant parts of the perceived object, and error as the non-observation of this essential part. The Vedāntic theory of pañcīkaraņa or quintuplication1 states that every object in nature is composed of all the five bhūtas or elements in varying proportions and insists on the structural affinity and solidarity of the visible and tangible universe though its thinghood is largely shaped by one predominant element among the ingredients. In the normal perception of the external object, jñāna reveals only this main part; but in error, owing to certain psycho-physical conditions, the self perceives only the non-essential and insignificant portion of the thing. In the shell-silver illusion the silver element which resembles the shell is singled out from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Şrī Bhāṣya, I. i. 1, p. 83 (Ananda Press Edition) and II. iv. 17.

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the complex of experience, and disillusionment arises when the silver content is known practically to have no economic value. Everything participates in the nature of everything else and all things or bhautikas are composed of all the elements or bhūtas. The thinghood of a thing as a part of the whole spatial order is so complex that the particular sciences can have only a practical and a partial knowledge of those aspects of the thing that are relevant to it and it is only the jñāni whose inana is perfected that can know all things as a whole. His mind transcends the one-to-one relation and acquires knowledge of the whole truth. But fragmentary knowledge is not a fiction or illusion projected by  $avidy\bar{a}$  and sublatable by iñāna. The reality of nature and its inter-related elements is due to the pervasive character of the atman that has entered into it as its self. Even the dream state is a psychic experience which may be traced to previous experiences registered in the psycho-physical complex and dreams often reveal the char acter of the dreamer and sometimes have a prophetic value. But Rāmānuja explains them morally as the wonderful creations of Isvara in accordance with the merit or demerit of the dreamer. In dreams the divinity creates specific objects suited to the specific merit or demerit of the jīva.1 The pleasure or pain experienced in that state is the result of the law of retribution and is as real as the moral life lived in the waking state. But it is purely subjective or private and has not the objective reality of the waking state which is the common theatre for all individuals and at all times. The distinction between what is private and what is public is one of degree and does not affect their reality. The theory of sublation is not applicable to these distinct and real experiences.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B.E., Vol. XLVIII, p. 120; Br. Up., VI. iii. 10 and Vedanta Sutras, III. ii. 3.

Epistemology is ultimately founded on the philosophy of religion which combines validity and value in the concept of the self as real reality and the true of the true. Thus all empirical knowledge is a partial revelation of reality or Self as the truth of truths and the distinction between *pramā* and *bhrama* (truth and error) is not absolute. When the ideal of knowledge is realised in *mukti*, *jñāna* becomes all-pervasive and the *mukta* knows everything. Then essence and existence become one.

Rāmānuja devotes a special section to the criticism of the theory of avidyā held by S'ankara. The Advaitic theory of avidyā holds that avidyā is neither real nor non-real, nor both and is therefore inexplicable. For example, in the illusion caused by mistaking the shell for silver, there is a misunderstanding which is indeterminable. It is first felt to be real and then rejected as unreal when there is true knowledge of the thing and it cannot be both real and unreal. It is adhyāsa or false super-imposition, because the silver cognition is superimposed on the shell cognition which is a felt 'this'. While the Advaitin frankly admits the indefinability of this illusion. he severely condemns other theories and gives them no quarter. The asatkhyāti of the S'ūnyavādin is, according to the Advaitin, untenable, as it says that the void is knowable in the same way as the substance on which the super-imposition occurs is itself non-existent. In the given example, silver is tuccha or non-existent. But it is impossible to cognise s'ūnva. The Vijñānavādin belongs to a more moderate school of Buddhism and his theory of error known as ātmakhyāti is based on a kind of subjective idealism. It explains the illusion as a mental state or psychic presentation which appears to be something external. But the idea is really of the object and not the object itself. A perishing psychosis cannot cognise itself. The defects of idealism are sought to be remedied by the realistic schools of Vaibhāsika and Sautrāntika and by the Mīmāmsaka and the Naiyāyika. The Mīmāmsaka theory of akhyāti or non-apprehension accepts the reality of both the cognitions, the perceived shell and the conceived or remembered silver, and traces the mistake to a defect in the tools of knowledge on account of which we fail to notice that silver is a recollected element. In the anyathākhyāti of the logician or Naiyāyika also, both shell and silver are real things. Shell is, however, wrongly perceived as another real object, namely, silver. The non-existence of shell means the existence of another object, silver, and this error is subjective. Rāmānuja's theory is also realistic and is objected to by the Advaitin on the ground that nothing can exist outside consciousness. His pragmatic method of verification may be convenient, but is not consistent. Truth may work, but what works is not necessarily true. The Advaitin thus demolishes all other theories of illusion and then says that his own theory cannot be explained and is anirvacanīva.

Avidyā, according to Advaita, is said to be the innate obscuration of pure consciousness which somehow divides the absolute and distorts it into the world of difference. It is an innate error which is beginningless, positive and indeterminable, though it can be removed by jñāna. The universal experience 'I do not know' refers to ignorance and is indefinite. In sleep where there is a temporary cessation of the consciousness of duality and difference, ignorance remains in its causal state or kāraṇa sarīra. It is owing to avidyā that Brahman, which is sat, cit, ānanda, is confused with the empirical self which is anyta or transient, jaḍa or inert and

dulkha or miserable, and this confusion is called adhyāsa and is the cause of all the evils of samsāra. Avidyā is thus the root of error in philosophy, original confusion or misconception. It is the basis of this baseless world of space-time-cause like the rope-snake illusion. Brahman alone is and what is not Brahman is false as it is different from it as in the rope-snake illusion. Difference cannot exist by itself, and it is only a distortion of reality. To trace the cause of avidyā is illegitimate as the concept of causality itself has its origin in avidyā. Pure consciousness is the locus (āsraya) of avdiyā and also its object. It is ever self-effulgent and avidyā cannot really conceal it, nor does it reside in the jīva as the jīva itself is its creation. Like the sun that shines unaffected by the mist, the atman is svayamįvotis and is not affected by avidya. Avidya is somehow there in Brahman, we know not why, and it only means that thought cannot reach what is beyond thought. Avidyā is indefinable, as it is neither real nor unreal nor both. It is not real as it is dissolved in the state of mukti; it is real as it now exists; and it cannot be both. It is a frank statement of the self-contradictions of life, though the absolute is beyond such discrepancy.

Though  $avidy\bar{a}$  transcends explanation, many explanations are given to account for its origin and nature. According to the 'reflection theory', the  $j\bar{v}a$  or  $ahank\bar{a}ra$  is a reflection of Brahman in the antahkarana due to  $avidy\bar{a}$  which is the subjective side of  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ . It makes the world a dream and a delusion, and the  $j\bar{v}va$  a mere phantasm. The 'phenomenon theory' refutes the view and defines  $avidy\bar{a}$  as a fact of finiteness which somehow limits the limitless.  $Avidy\bar{a}$  is a fall from  $j\bar{n}\bar{a}na$ , and is not a fictitious something. The world is unreal, but not illusory, and the  $j\bar{v}va$  is a fact of

experience and not a phantasm. The world has relative reality though its relation to the absolute cannot be explained. A third theory of avidyā denies phenomenal reality and explains the external object as the illusory projection of the perceiving consciousness and makes Isvara Himself a super-jīva. A fourth view denies avidyā itself as its recognition as a separate entity is an admission of the reality of two states, jñāna and ajñāna. Brahman exists for ever and avidyā is non-existent like the son of a barren woman. All schools of Advaita are on the whole agreed that it is avidyā that is the cause of all confusion and misery in life. Though it has no beginning, it has an end and in mukti it is stultified. The chief value of the concept of avidyā in the philosophy of Advaita is that it exposes the inadequacy of all dualistic theories though it is by itself inexplicable.

Rāmānuja, in his masterly introduction to his S'rī Bhāsya, subjects this theory to severe criticism and his classical refutation of it is known as saptavidha anubapatti or the sevenfold inadmissibility. The seven charges are āsraya anuþaþatti, tirödhāna anuþaþatti, svarūþānupapatti, anirvacanīya anupapatti, pramāna anupapatti, nivartakānupapatti, and nivrtti anupapatti. The first charge is that there can be no basis for the baseless fabrication of avidyā. The illusionist seeks to avoid the nihilism of the Mādhyamika by positing a locus, substratum or adhistāna for avidyā. The seat of avidyā should be either the jīva or Brahman, neither of which is conceivable. It cannot be the  $j\bar{i}va$  as the  $j\bar{i}va$  itself is the fictitious creation of avidyā, nor can it be Brahman as Brahman is self-illumined and can never be enveloped by avidyā. To trace the locus of avidyā to the jīva and that of the jīva to avidyā is to commit

the fallacy of anyonyasraya or mutual dependence. How the non-dual consciousness is caught up in duality is the supreme riddle of Advaita. Besides, a philosophy which discards the notion of substance and substratum as mediaeval and scholastic is not justified in utilising it in its own doctrine of āsrava. Avidyā has no resting place and is therefore nothing. The next objection is that there can be really no obscuration or tirodhāna of Brahman at all. Brahmasvarūþa is jñāna and is self-luminous. Either it is pure consciousness or not. If it is the former, it cannot be obscured, obstructed or destroyed by nescience. But if it is covered by avidyā, it is virtually destroyed by it. How or why svayamjyōtis veils itself is the stumbling block of S'ankara Vedānta. The third objection relates to the understanding of the svarūpa or nature of avidyā. Avidyā is either real or unreal. If it is an entity or bhāva rūba, then it is inherent in Brahman as mulāvidvā and cannot be destroyed; Advaita is disproved by positing two reals. If it is unreal, as the more thoroughgoing monist says, there is no mulāvidvā or tulāvidvā as one or many. The fourth criticism is levelled against the anirvacanīva theory of indefinability. Theorising activity is the actual work of thought and to say that there is a theory which is indefinable (sadasadvilakṣana) is meaningless. If avidyā is neither bare negation nor significant negation, but is an indeterminable something which somehow infects reality, it is a something which can never be sublated. The philosophic humility which underlies the admission of anirvacanīva is mere mock humility as the avidyā theory mercilessly attacks other theories with the devastating dialectics of a Nāgārjuna. The Advaitin first explains avidyā as a phenomenon, then as an illusion, and, when he is cornered, explains it away as indeterminable. The fifth charge is that the theory

of avidvā is not supported by sastraic authority or any other bramāna.1 Illusion is an abnormal phenomenon and it is opposed to the first principles of philosophy to treat the abnormal as its starting point. The terms asatya (unreal) and nāsti (is not), which are opposed to satya (the real) and asti (is), refer not to the unreal or the non-existent but to nonsentient objects. Nivartaka anubabatti is the criticism of the theory of the sublation of avidvā. Aiñāna cannot be sublated or dispelled by iñāna, as jñāna is itself the effect of ajñāna. But if it is something given, it can be removed only by spiritual discipline and not by the mere knowledge of self-identity. If Brahman is ever existent and avidyā non-existent, then the term mumuksutva conveys no meaning at all. The last criticism is known as nivrttivānubabatti and is the objection to the Advaitic theory of mukti. Brahmajñāna is not, according to Advaitins, the iñana of Brahman, but it is iñāna that is Brahman. It is said that iñāna stultifies ajñāna and then stultifies itself; if so, jñāna is an act of spiritual suicide. With the vanishing of avidyā, jagat and Isvara also perish and Advaita is nihilistic.

These charges are further elaborated by Vedānta Desika in his polemical work, the S'ata Dūṣani. The objections may be classified under the different headings adopted in this philosophic study and summarised as follows: From the standpoint of epistemology, the theory of avidyā and adhyāsa leads to agnosticism and scepticism. If

¹ The recognition of anupalabdhi, or the absence of apprehension as a separate pramana is riddled with self-contradiction as avidya which obscures pure consciousness is felt to be there as positive indefinite and yet is false. Even in the proposition 'I do not know,' I admit the fact of avidya and the 'I' persists as a real self. To say that avidya is somehow there and sublated later by jnana is to admit the duality of avidya and jnana and get involved in the dualism between the two. If avidya is bare negation, the question of removing it does not arise.

Brahman is ever self-realised, there is no need for a philosophy to expound it. If Brahman cannot be the object of knowledge, it cannot be sought by the mumuksu. If whatever is knowable is false. Brahman is also false. The indeterminate has at least the quality of being indeterminate. To say that it transcends all relational thought including Vedic knowledge is to commit intellectual suicide and syruticide. The theory of knowledge is thus the theory of the denial of knowledge. The monistic ontology of nirguna Brahman as pure consciousness without any content borders on nihilism. Nirguna Brahman has the quality of being nirguna. Consciousness cannot be aware of itself without the self as its subject. Advaita fails to explain the relation between the one and the many, being and becoming, affirmation and negation and the absolute and the relative. Difference cannot be denied without denying identity as the two are relative. Advaitic cosmology suffers from the defects of pan-illusionism and acosmism. If Brahman, the subject or substratum, is real, the universe is equally real and not an illusion. If the universe is an illusion, Brahman also is conditioned by it and is illusory. Nescience is an inexplicable something, and the distinction between māyā and avidyā is meaningless. To say that the world is a magic show created by the māyin makes the creator a conjurer. If the effect is an illusion superposed on the cause, the cause is also infected. The psychology of Advaita is equally defective as it virtually refutes the existence of the jīva and is engulfed in subjectivism. The denial of many selves on logical grounds is also the denial of even the single self theory. If the self that has consciousness is false, consciousness itself is false, There is no need for the theory of a sākṣin as its purpose is served by the self as a knowing entity. Monistic ethics brings out the discrepancy between karma and jñāna, and concludes

that the pure consciousness sublates the moral ego and transcends the distinction between good and evil. In Advaita religion occupies a subordinate position in relation to philosophy, as the God of religion is said to be less than the absolute owing to the discrepancy between two wills, finite and infinite. If so, religion is finally sublated in philosophy, and has no meaning at all. Jñāna is said to dispel the dualistic consciousness arising from avidyā. But even jñāna results from aiñāna, and is not different from it. Jīvanmukti is self-contradictory as jīvātman with embodiedness cannot co-exist with mukti, which is freedom from it. Mukti cannot admit of degrees, stages and divisions. If the jīva is identical with Isvara, then mukti is absolute and there can no longer be any question of other jīvas and Isvara or kārya Brahman existing in the empirical state of avidyā and māyā. Besides, the world process should cease to exist after the first instance of jīvanmukti, but it continues in spite of it. If avidyā or māyā is ultimately non-existent and Brahman is ever identical with itself, there is no problem for the mumuksu, and therefore no need for mukti. Thus, from every standpoint, Advaitic monism is found to be inconsistent with every kind of pramāna.

Rāmānuja sums up the defects of the monistic theory of avidyā ending in the philosophy of eka-jīva as follows: From the standpoint of pure consciousness everything is false. Sāstra is false, the knowledge derived from the sāstra is false, the guru-disciple relation is false. The idea that everything is false itself arises from the falsity of sāstra itself. This relentless refutation of Advaita leads him to the reconstruction of philosophy in terms of satkhyāti or yathārtakhyāti or what may be called the 'yes' philosophy. It affirms that what exists

<sup>1</sup> Vedartha Sangraha (Vasudevachariar's edition), p. 19.

(sat) is alone known. Reality is always savisesa and not nirvisesa, and in apprehending a thing as it is we also comprehend what it is. The 'that' is qualified by the 'what.' Satkhvāti is not realism in its modern sense as it insists on the reality of nature in all its aspects, physical, spiritual and divine. Its meaning is fully brought out in the thesis of sadvidyā, that by knowing the one all is known (eka vijñānena sarva-vijāānam). By knowing Brahman, the ground of the universe, the universe also is known. The universe is ensouled by Brahman (Brahmātmaka). It comes from sat, and not from asat, and therefore is sat. Brahman is one as the prakārin and the many as the prakāras, and both are real. The system of nature and the society of jīvas derive their meaning and value from Brahman who is the inner self of all. Therefore everything—thought and word—ultimately connotes Brahman. Thus, by knowing the one we know the many, as its visesana, prakāra or sarīra and, by knowing the many, we know the one that is changeless and eternal. In this way Rāmānuja gives an extended meaning of satkhvāti in the light of sadvidyā and concludes that, since Brahman is real, the world is also real and true. He interprets  $avidy\bar{a}$  ethically by equating it with karma and concludes that the jīva freed from avidyā-karma sees all things in Brahman and Brahman in all things.

## CHAPTER III

## THE THEORY OF TWO BRAHMANS CRITICISED

THE chief issue in metaphysics is the problem whether the absolute of philosophy is the God of religion and whether there are two Brahmans, saguna and nirguna. Of all the Vedantic schools, Advaita alone makes a distinction between saguna Brahman or Brahman with attributes and nirguna Brahman or Brahman without attributes and supports it by the authority of the S'ruti and the Sūtras. It is in the light of this dual standpoint that S'ankara expounds the Vedanta Satras dealing with the meaning of sadvidyā, ānandamaya, ubhaya linga and kārya Brahman. Firstly sadvidyā brings out, according to S'ankara, the contrast between the sat without a second or the indeterminate and Isvara, the determinate. The sat is advitīva (without a second) and nirguna and the moment it wills the many and becomes the manifold, it is said to entangle itself in the illusions of relatedness. Caught up, as it were, in the duality of the subject-object relation, it becomes *Isvara* or the determinate. Determination is negation and therefore saguna Brahman is finite and is a mere appearance. But nirguna Brahman is pure undifferentiated being or consciousness without the distinction of subject and object. Secondly, Brahman as anandamaya is saguna Brahman, the logical highest, or the absolute made in the mouldsof thought. The moment we think of Brahman, ananda

lapses into vijāāna and the not-self enters into the integrity of being and makes it being-becoming.1 The absolute as the intuitional highest becomes Isvara as its highest conceptual reading. Predication as a logical relation perverts reality. When the contentless bliss of Brahman is logically defined as blissfulness, it is only maximum bliss with an element of imperfection. In saguna Brahman there is a 'balance of pleasure over pain,' but there is no absolute joy. Thirdly, in the Ubhaya Linga Adhikarana, S'ankara makes the same distinction. Strictly speaking, Brahman cannot at the same time be transcendentally formless being and phenomenalised Isvara, on account of the self-contradiction of the finite-infinite inherent in the dual idea. The neti method of the Upanisad denies only the pluralistic consciousness fictitiously superimposed on Brahman and not Brahman itself, as such denial would favour the nihilistic philosophy of universal void and be a stultification of the entire Vedānta. The formless, characterless Brahman is, however, spatialised and personalised by the religious consciousness in the interests of devout meditation. Fourthly, Brahman is apprehended metaphysically as the self-identical absolute and is the metaphysical highest and not Isvara or kārva Brahman or effected Brahman who is the God of theology. It is only the effected Brahman that has a world of His own which is attained by devotion. Spatial and temporal categories apply to the empirical world and cannot have a transcendental use. Jaimini who refers to the world of Brahman is only on the theological level, but Bādari, the metaphysician, rejects the illusions of space and time and the values of progress and attainment. Nirguna Brahman is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Param jaiminir mukhyatvāt. S. B., IV. iii. 11 kāryam bādarir asya gatyupapatteh. S. B. IV. iii. 6.

alogical, amoral and impersonal and the idea of saguna Brahman is only a concession to ignorance.

Advaita as a critical analysis of reality without seeking the aid of S'ruti may be viewed as subject philosophy, subjectobject philosophy or object philosophy. The first is an idealistic view that accepts the Upanisadic truth that the knower cannot be known, that it is the 'I' beyond the 'me' and that it alone constitutes reality. Avidyā objectifies pure consciousness and makes it a semblance and Isvara Himself is drsva or an object of thought. Drsva is illusion externalised and can be thought away. Idealism ends in subjectivism and subjectivism ends in the super-subjectivism of eka-jīva-vāda in which the whole universe emerges from the single 'I' and merges into or is sublated in it. This method is adopted by the Yōgavāsista and has a Buddhistic tinge. According to the illusion theory, *Isvara* is the māyin or the arch-illusionist, the 'first figment of cosmic nescience', who projects the world show like a juggler. He is the self-luminous Brahman reflected in the satvic medium of  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  or the infinite finitised by the upādhis or the sum-total of semblances. The phenomenon theory says that relational thought betrays the selfcontradiction and disruption between existence and content, and is therefore dualistic and divisive. The idea of saguna Brahman is riddled with the contradictions of being-becoming, one-many. The God of religion is thus less real than the absolute of philosophy and though there is no real difference between dust and deity, there are degrees of reality. God is the logical highest or the highest reading of the absolute. Isvara is an aggregate of the jīvas and is the concrete universal realised in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> These ideas are developed in the theories known as bimba-pratibimba vāda and avaccheda vāda.

the world of particulars. The distinction between phenomenal and transcendental reality is a recognition of the object philosophy and the need for theistic faith in a personal god. Saguna Brahman is the absolute cast in the moulds of religion and has the inner necessity of self-transcendence. Still another school of Advaita holds that Brahman is ever existent and māvā is ever non-existent and Advaita is no philosophy or religion as it affirms what is and does not theorise about it, in its academic and practical aspects. Advaita thus oscillates between Buddhistic idealism and theism and either accepts or denies Isvara. If it accepts the existence of Isvara, it implies the co-existence of two Brahmans, the Personal and the Impersonal, and, guided by ethico-religious motive, posits the practical reality of saguna Brahman; but, if it denies Isvara, it follows the devastating dialectic of Nāgārjuna and ends in s'ūnyavāda.

The Advaitic distinction between two Brahmans is controverted and rejected by the other Vedāntins, especially by the other monistic schools like the Bhedābheda of Bhāskara, as a speculation riddled with fallacies, without possessing any value. The contention of the Māyāvādin that determination is negation is not supported by S'ruti and has no rational basis. The Upaniṣad points to the reality of spiritual truths which can be determined only spiritually and not dialectically. The dialectic of Māyāvāda is self-destructive and affirms nothing.' The thesis of sadvidyā is the discovery of the sat or ādesa by realising which everything else is realised and it is a cosmological account of the One differentiating itself into the many and becoming the manifold of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a detailed criticism of *Māyāvāda*, vide, Chap. V of the author's work *The Philosophy of Bhedābheda*.

subjects and objects of experience. The manifold consists of distincts and not of opposites. The Advaitic acceptance of parināma-vāda or the theory that Brahman evolves into the universe with a view to its later rejection in terms of vivarta or phenomenal or illusory development is a typical example of the self-contradiction implied in its philosophy of two standpoints. In addition to this fallacy it is open to the charge of sruta-hāni or text torture and asruta kalbana or mere fabrication. That the absolute divides itself into finite centres may be a cosmological mystery. The self-creative activity of Brahman may be a puzzle, but not a fiction. Self-differentiation is no denial of the integrity of Brahman as it is savisesa and not nirvis'esa, and the true meaning of negation is not bare negation or nothingness, but is significant negation presupposing affirmation. Abhāva is not a separate category or pramāna. When it fills up in meaning with reference to the context, it is on a par with affirmation. When we say that there is no jar on the ground, we mean that we see only the ground and not the jar. When we say that Brahman is nirguna, we mean that it is not prakrti, but the supreme self other than prakrti. This view is called the bhavantarabhava theory of negation or negativing the existence of something else. All abhāva resolves itself into a bhāva other than the correlate. But if determination is considered a defect of reality or avidvā, then Brahman would be infested by the all-enveloping darkness that somehow arises from it and there would be no way of escape from this gloom. The causal category that explains Brahman as the first cause and final cause of the world order is different from the Sānkhyan theory of parināma or evolution from prakrti or matter and the Naiyāyika theory of samavāva. as the term cause is ultimately identical with the ground and the inner purpose of world progress. It is thus not a category

of thought that is used to explain what is beyond it. It is not an altar to an unknown God, but is a spiritual way of stating that the infinite expresses itself in the finite as its informing self with a view to infinitise it and thus of overcoming the conflict between the mechanical and the teleological applications of the term. The Vedānta Sūtras begin with the philosophic definition of Brahman as the ground or reason of finite existence and end with the knowledge of Brahman as the goal of spiritual experience. The Kantian problem of metaphysics and religion "What can I know?" and "What may I hope for?" is thus satisfactorily solved. The Sadvidvā enquires into the meaning of sat as the ultimate fact of knowledge and concludes that the secondless sat is the supreme self and is the home of the eternal values of life. But the Sanmātravādin refers to bare being as a logical abstraction which may lapse into the universal void and the eternal night of the absolute.

The Taittirīya text that says that Brahman is ānandamaya is an aesthetic description of the abounding and boundless bliss of Brahman which cannot be explained in terms of the logical intellect. It has no reference to the dialectic opposition between the thesis of ānanda and the antithesis of ānandamaya as a fall from ānanda. As the text starts with Brahmajñāna and ends with Brahmānanda as the highest end of life, it is not aware of the distinction between the knowledge of nirguna Brahman as the intuitional highest and the attainment of saguna Brahman as the logical highest. To say that S'ankara is on the intuitional level and Rāmānuja on the logical is unfair to both of them; and the distinction between intuition and logic becomes a yawning

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> ānandam brahmano vidvān, Taitt. Up., Ānanda-valli, 4 and 9.

gulf between the two. Brahman is and has bliss, and the predication of bliss to Brahman does not pervert its nature but enriches it. The idea of transcendental bliss does not sublate saguṇa Brahman, but affirms its knowability by purified thought. The description of Isvara as a self caught up in the contradiction of pleasure and pain and as a glorified samsārin is not supported by sāstra or by practical reason. Isvara, according to S'ankara, controls māyā and is not controlled by it.

S'ruti would stultify itself if it defined the nature of Brahman as saguna or having attributes with a view to deprive it of all content by later thought. The neti or negative method employed by the Upanisad denies only the adequacy of employing the categories of logic to establish the reality of Brahman and its chief aim is the criticism of the pantheistic view that all is Brahman and the denial of the finitude of reality but not of the finite itself. The absolute is in the conditioned as cit and acit and it is not as the conditioned. It transcends the world of relativity, but does not sublate it. Brahman is formless but not characterless. If the absolute of metaphysics is not the god of upāsana or meditation and worship but the effectuation of illusion, there would be no need for spirituality and the striving for mukti. The distinction between the metaphysical highest realised here and now in jīvanmukti and the theological highest or the phenomenalised or spatialised Brahman attained in the world of Brahman that is yonder is refuted by Bhaskara on the ground that Vedāntic freedom is won by spiritual effort by transcending the phenomenal world in its macrocosmic and microcosmic aspects. Avidyā is dispelled only when māyā, of which it is a part, is stultified. Jñāna connotes the removal of avidvā. If

mukti is only a case of partial disillusionment, it is no mukti at all, and, strictly speaking, it should be Isvara mukti or Brahma mukti as avidyā-māyā envelops not the iīva which is the effect of avidva but the self-identity and integrity of Brahman itself. Brahman is transcendental because it is beyond the empirical world or samsāra mandala. If mukti is the sublation of avidvā which is really non-existent like the square-circle, it is immaterial whether it is freedom in embodiment here and now or freedom from embodiment in the world beyond. S'ankara, however, makes a concession to anthropomorphism and guarantees eventual freedom or krama mukti to the theist who in his ignorance clothes the absolute in space-time and humanises it. Even from the standpoint of textual interpretation, the opinion of S'ankara that Bādari's view expounded first is the Sūtrakāra's siddhānta and that it is followed by the brima facie view of Jaimini which it rebuts, is "altogether inadmissible." i the invariable practice of the Vedanta Sūtras as well as the Pūrva Mīmāmsa Sūtras to conclude the discussion of contested points with the statement of that view which is to be accepted as the authoritative one. It is arbitrary to say that Jaimini is only on the theological level and is without the rational insight of Bādari. The religious consciousness is outraged by the relegation of saguna Brahman who is at first described as the creator of the cosmic process to the level of Hiranyagarbha, the first born of Brahman, when evaluating mūkti. If saguna Brahman is less than the absolute. it suffers from self-deception as it is the first figment of cosmic nescience, from the self-contradiction of its finiteinfinite nature and from the infinite hardships of samsāra as the aggregate of the jīvas and finally it has less chance of mukti than the jīvanmukta. But if it is conjoined

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B. E., No. XXXIV? p. 91 (Introduction).

with  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  and its sakti and becomes its controller, the theory has a family resemblance to the  $parin\bar{a}ma-v\bar{a}da$  of  $Bhed\bar{a}bheda$ .

The other schools of Bhedabheda are equally strong in their repudiation of the theory of nirguna Brahman and in upholding the reality of saguna Brahman in the bhinnābhinna relation which does equal justice to the aspects of identity and difference. According to Yadava, being or sanmatra is the essential nature of Brahmatva, and it is the undifferentiated that differentiates itself by its parinama sakti or power of evolution into Isvara, cit and acit, each having its own form and function. The absolute streams forth in a series of emanations till its irradiation reaches the realm of matter. It is the plenitude of being and is not to be confused with the bad or quantitative infinite. The absolute is not Iśwara, but is Iswara and the finite centres. There is a unity in trinity, but each has its own distinctness and content. Isvara, though an element of the absolute, is not the effectuation of māyā, but has the perfections of God. The jīva is not fictitious or formal, but is a real modal expression or feature of reality and is both finite and infinite. Isvara and the jīva do not suffer from inner contradiction, but are correlative factors in the totality of being. The infinite evolves into the finite and remains as itself in spite of its modal manifestations. Nimbārka, in his philosophy of mono-dualism, avoids the extremes of monism and pluralism when he explains the absolute as both static and dynamic. In relation to the world, Brahman is dynamic, but is not a relative absolute and, when it is out of relation to it, it is static and exists in itself as self-complete. In its abheda or non-difference aspect, Brahman is sakta and is self-related, and in the bhedabheda aspect it is stakti and connotes distinction and dependence and evolves into the forms of cit and acit. The Dvaita-advaita school of Nimbārka has greater affinities with Visiṣṭādvaita than with the schools of Bhāskara and Yādava owing to its insistence on the jīva as a distinct entity that derives its form from Brahman and depends on it.

The Vedāntic exposition of bhedābheda is serviceable to Visistādvaita on account of its refutation of the theory of nirguna Brahman. The view of Bhaskara that saguna Brahman is determinate but formless is repugnant to the other schools which accept the reality of *Isvara* as distinct from the finite centres. Likewise the theory of Yādaya, that Brahmatva inheres in Isvara, cit and acit, is an abstract universal without any connection of content. As being is fully present in its parts, the whole is the part, and dust and divinity would become one. But if the whole is greater than the part, Isvara is Brahmāms'a or part of Brahman, and is less than the absolute and is finite and helpless like the jīva itself. The view that Brahman is conditioned by ubādhis or limiting adjuncts is wild and vicious and is more mischievous than the illusion theory as it attributes the evils, errors and other imperfections of life to Brahman that is eternally pure and perfect. If the unconditioned Brahman is conditioned by these limiting adjuncts, good and evil follow necessarily from the divine nature. and God suffers from the sorrows of samsara in His own infinite way. From the supreme light of sat there blaze forth a Rāma and a Rāvana. This view affords no hope of the stability of mukti. Likewise the Nimbarka view that the sakti of Brahman alone changes and not Brahman is futile,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Brahmajñānapakṣādapi pāpīyānayam bhedābhedapakṣaḥ.—*Vedārtha* Saṅgraha, p. 177.

as Brahman and its sakti are inseparable. S'āktavāda does not favour the theory of māyā or upādhis as it posits an eternal measuring or finitising principle or s'akti that is immanent in the infinite and refers to Brahman as impersonal and personal at the same time. The infinite is in each part and each part is infinite and aspires to become God. But S'āktavāda traces evil and error to the heart of reality and sees no difference between Brahman and a block of stone. The concept of identity in difference is palpably false as the co-existence of contradictories is impossible. The true meaning of sāmānādhikaranya is not identity, non-duality or unity, but is the inseparable relation between a thing and its attribute or dharmin and dharma. The relation between the infinite and the finite is to be understood in terms not of Advaita or Bhedābheda but of the Visistādvaitic truth of prakāra and prakārin. Bhedābheda is on the horns of a dilemma. If it stresses the abheda or non-different side of ekībhāva or oneness like the school of Bhāskara, its logical conclusion is Māyāvāda which it rejects. But if it stresses the bheda or difference side like the schools of Yādava and Nimbārka, its logical and ethical conclusion is Visistādvaita and the history of Bhedābheda definitely favours the latter alternative. Visistādvaita alone takes the dilemma by the horns.

The absolutistic tradition in the west which affords parallels to *Vedāntic* thought may be shown to have more affinity with *Bhedābheda* than with *Advaita*. A study of this question is essential to the understanding of *Visiṣṭādvaita*, as *Bhedābheda* is often confused with it by western scholars. It is fully discussed in my book "The Philosophy of Bhedābheda". It is said that, if a man has no Spinozism, he has no standing in philosophy and some modern Indian philosophers discern

the Visistādvaitic strain in the fundamental idea of Spinoza. Spinoza is interpreted in different ways. If substance excludes all determination, and the attributes are not real but only what the intellect perceives as the essence of the substance, the view of Spinoza resembles that of S'ankara more than that of Rāmānuja. But John Caird rejects this theory of substance as a barren abstraction and gives a Hegelian version of Spinozism. Substance is to be explained by the principle of self-determination and not indetermination. The absolute is the self that, by its inner impulse, goes out of itself to objects that are opposed to it and then returns to itself. But others interpret it as a philosophy of religion which suggests similar lines of thought in the Yādava school. Substance is selfconditioned and all-inclusive and its modes are conditioned reals that derive their being from substance. Substance or God is the free cause of all things and is natura naturans; but in the form of mode it is natura naturata. Substance determines itself to modes. It is not the totality of modes but is the modes. The modes of matter are as divine as the modes of the mind. The mode in its particularity and contingence is finite and perishing, but as part of the essence of reality it is infinite and eternal. If this exposition is correct, the theory of natura naturans and the truth that the unity of the absolute is realised in the modal multiplicity of thinking things and objects resemble more the Bhedābheda idea of Brahman and Brahma parināma vāda than the Visistādvaitic truth of Brahman as the prakarin. If substance is the same as the world of nature, there is no need for God, and the theory becomes a kind of materialistic monism; if it is interpreted idealistically, it very nearly affirms the illusoriness of the finite. Some Indian thinkers recognise the affinity between the monadic theism of Leibnitz and the teaching of Rāmānuja.

The resemblance is, on the whole, superficial as the idea of God as the monad of monads is distinct from the Visiṣṭād-vaitic idea of Brahman as the antaryāmin or Inner Self of all beings. Reality is qualified by plurality, but is not itself plural, as the existence of exclusive monads does not make for unity.

A very close affinity is recognised between Rāmānuja and Hegel in some notable expositions of Indian thought. both, the absolute is the real for thought with an element of negativity in it, and is the synthetic unity of relational and logical experience. It is the triune unity consisting of God, soul and nature. Brahman is Isvara cast in the moulds of logic and is a self-conscious personality with the not-self as an integral element of His being, and He loses Himself in order to find Himself. Experience is an identity in difference, a synthesis of opposites, and Isvara is the generalised concept of such experience, and is the one-many, being-becoming, infinite-finite. A distinction is drawn by some thinkers between the Hegelian synthesis or dialectic unity of opposites and Rāmānuja's synthesis of distincts. The modern Advaitic exponents are generally agreed that Rāmānuja is only on the vijñāna or logical level while S'ankara is on the higher level of intuition. Rāmānuja's Brahman, according to them, is the logical highest or the real for thought, and is less than S'ankara's Brahman or the intuitional highest which is the real in itself. The logical intellect changes the intuition of the indeterminate or nirguna Brahman into the organic unity of the concrete universal or saguna Brahman. But the panlogism of Hegel is entirely distinct from Visistādvaitic thought and has more affinity with Bhedābheda, and calls for similar criticism. In attempting the fusion of the opposites of identity and difference, panlogism ends in confusion, and its rationalism lapses into materialism, as it fails to explain the reality of the contingent elements in experience. In mounting to the higher category, the lower is not surmounted or transcended, and finitude and evil remain as integral factors of reality. An infinity of universals cannot make the universe. If the world process is the perfection of the Idea, then samsāra is more real and valuable than salvation. No upāsaka or seeker after mukti adores an evolving, synthetic unity or a college of selves or a deified samsārin. The dialectical view of the one-many lands us in the defects of intellectualism, as the logical idea is hypostatised as the absolute. Every school of Vedānta is clear that divinity can be established not by dialectic skill but by revelational faith and direct intuition.

The method of equating Visistādvaita with the notion of qualified non-dualism or the adjectival theory of the absolute like that of Bosanquet is equally misleading and futile. Bosanquet's theory of judgment on its philosophical side rightly affirms that reality is knowable and that every thought refers to the absolute as the ultimate subject. To Bosanquet, the whole of reality is the subject of predication, and the life of logic is the spirit of totality that seeks the stability of thought in the concrete universal. The absolute is the self-related and unconditioned real, but is realised in the relative, and the finite self is a predicate having connection of content with the whole and derives its meaning from it. The finite self is finite-infinite, and has a double nature. As the finite, it is self-contradictory, has formal distinctness and exclusive selffeeling; but, as the infinite, it transcends itself and becomes stable in the whole. The finite thing is a collection of adjectives housed in the infinite and its individuation is due to the

limitations of space and time. The absolute is the meeting of extremes, and the God of religion is less than the all-inclusive whole and is only an appearance. Finiteness and imperfection are not annulled, but are transfigured, and they contribute to the whole. The adjectival theory of the absolute developed by Bosanquet denies svarūpa aikya or absolute identity, and affirms visista aikya or attributive oneness; but it is more allied to Bhedābheda than to Visistādvaita. Both Bosanquet and Yādava insist on the postulation of identity in difference as the supreme law of thought, and expound the nature of the absolute as a concrete unity. But while Bosanquet accepts imperfection as an element of perfect life, though in a transmuted state, the Bhedābheda-vādin, relying on s'ruti, refers to Brahman as the Perfect untainted by finitude and evil. Rāmānuja may agree with both in the logical idea of the finite self being a mode of the absolute, but he rejects the adjectival theory, and affirms the reality of the finite self as a substantive mode having focalised being or uniqueness.

Some modern Advaitins favour the dialectic method of Bradley and Nāgārjuna in demolishing the reality of the God of religion as only an appearance of reality riddled with self-contradictions. Every thought is relational and sunders the 'what' from the 'that'. Relation is external to the relata and involves self-discrepancy; but it points to the absolute which is trans-relational. If God is a self against other selves, he is only an appearance of the absolute and is finite. Short of the absolute, God cannot rest; but if he reaches it, he is lost. In the unity of the absolute, all ethical and religious contradictions are reconciled, and it is richer for every discord that it embraces and transmutes. Bradley, like Nāgārjuna and the monistic dialecticians, is very effective in abolishing the

appearances; but in his constructive philosophy he tries to save them as revelations of the absolute. The supra-relational and the relational are not continuous, and the dualism between the two is not overcome. While Hegel trusts thought, Bradley distrusts it. The scepticism of Kantian metaphysics has its conclusion in the agnosticism of Bradley, though, to escape scepticism, he says that reality is sentient experience. This is entirely different from the mystic intuition of Brahman. There is as much contrast between S'ankara and Bradley as there is between Rāmānuja and Hegel; and both Bradley and Hegel belong on the whole to the Bhedābheda type. The absolute is not only beyond relational thought, but is conscious of that experience and is therefore the Supreme Self. It cannot, "like a sponge, suck in its own selfhood." The self is affirmed even in the act of denying it. Relations do relate and relational thought presupposes the absolute as a self-conscious being; and Royce identifies it with will. The absolute is unique with infinity as its character, and its will is expressed through individual wills. Fichte also stresses the ethical side of philosophy and his realistic idealism resembles Bhedābheda. The absolute is the self-active ego that posits itself by opposing the non-ego. This opposition is not external to consciousness, but is in consciousness itself. Like the white light broken up into -coloured rays, the absolute limits itself and conquers the limitations. The pantheism of Fitchte is midway between the views of S'ankara and Rāmānuja, and is allied to Bhedābheda and it is not free from the perils of subjectivism. Schelling's idea of the absolute ego is aesthetic and mystical rather than metaphysical, and its idealism is like that of Yādava as it invests nature also with consciousness. But the unity is more of substance than of the self, and the absolute is

<sup>1</sup> Vide Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 526.

a neutrem though it divides itself into subject and object. As Hegel observes, it is like the night in which all cows are black.

Vis'istādvaita cannot be identified with western pantheism, as the history of pantheism does not bring out any definite meaning, especially in its concept of the absolute and its relation to the finite. If pantheism means that all is God and equates God with the universe, no Vedāntic school is pantheistic. The universe has its being in God, but is not God, and does not exhaust His infinity. If pantheism means the theory of 'one prodigious aggregated god,' everything is equally divine and equally worthless, and the moral and religious consciousness is outraged by this shallow pantheism. But if it means that God is all and that the universe is false, it is allied to pan-illusionism and acosmism. Acosmism has some relation to the theory of nisprapañca-niyōga-vāda, but it is not Visistādvaita. If pantheism has an idealistic trend and drifts towards monism. it starts with the self and ends with subjectivism. If it is identity or aikya-consciousness, it is akin to Advaita. If it is identified with the neo-Platonic theory of emanation which says that the world is the overflow of the one, it is an echo of the Bhedābheda view of Brahmaparināma. Likewise the world view of Spinoza as natura naturata does not bring out the Visistādvaitic distinction between Brahman, cit and acit. The panlogism of Hegel, the realistic idealism of Fitchte and the mysticism of Schelling have already been shown to blur the boundary lines between Advaita and Visistadvaita and drift towards Bhedābheda. Pantheism has the merit of recognising the divineness of the universe and rejecting the ego-centric standpoint; but its fatal defect is the denial of the evilness of evil and the reality of the moral.

consciousness. The all-God theory destroys God and the self that seeks God, and gives man a logical and moral holiday. The all-inclusive absolute of pantheism is so elastic as to provide for truth and error, goodness and evil, and it accommodates itself both to perfection and to imperfection. To say that whatever is is right is a denial of moral distinctions and a lapse into fatalism. If pantheism is the philosophy of pure immanence in which God merely transforms Himself into the universe, no *Vedāntic* school is pantheistic as *Vedānta* affirms transcendence as well as immanence. *Vedānta*, including *Advaita* in its *vyāvahāric* or practical aspect, insists on the distinction between Brahman, *cit* and *acit*, the moral law of *karma* and the need for *mukti*.

The western concept of theism is also vague and is, in its modern version, influenced by the pantheistic idea of immanence, and is sometimes equated with personalism. Theism may be defined as the faith in a personal God as the Creator of the universe entering into personal relations with man with a view to redeeming him from his career of sin. Visistādvaita is not strictly theistic, as theism does not favour the idea of aprthaksiddhavisesana (of the jīva being an inseparable attribute of God), visista aikva or attributive oneness, the mystic experience of ecstasy, and sarīra-sarīri unity. Nor is it to be identified with panillusionism which savs that God is all and everything else is illusion. It is likewise different from emanational theories like those of Plotinus and the panlogism of Hegel which affirms that reality is rational. The term Vedānta connotes not only a dialectic philosophy, but also a darsana which is different from western philosophy. The terms Dvaita, Advaita and Wisistādvaita have each a clear and distinct meaning and are different from the corresponding western varieties of theism, monism and pantheism. While the latter expound the nature of the relation between God and the universe, the former stress the spiritual side of experience and expound the nature of the relation between the finite self and the Infinite or God.

The criticism of the various theories of the absolute in the east as well as in the west enables us to determine precisely the Visistādvaitic idea of Brahman. The Advaitic view of two Brahmans is admittedly self-contradictory and refuted by the other Vedāntins, notably by the Bhedābhedavadins who uphold the monistic view of the absolute as sat or saguna Brahman. While Bhāskara affirms the reality of Brahman as formless but not characterless, Yādava and Nimbārka deny its being nirguna or attributeless and niravayava or formless; but Nimbārka's view of Brahman as the selfrelated (svatantra satbhāva) in its abheda aspect and the distinct and the dependent (paratantra satbhāva) in its bhedābheda aspect has affinities with Rāmānuja's idea of God as nivanta or the immanent and eminent cause of the world order. Bhāskara denies the idea of an indefinable māyā or being-non-being infecting the very source of reality and making the finite a figment of māvā. He traces the world order to the self-conditioning nature of the absolute which is therefore satyopādhi or real limiting adjuncts and not mithyopadhi or unreal limiting adjuncts. If we substitute parināma for upādhi, we arrive at the Yādava version of Bhedābheda which attributes equal reality to the aspects of identity and difference. If the cosmic process is traced to the creative urge of sakti at the heart of reality, the Yādava view is replaced by the account of Nimbārka. The philosophical transition from Nimbarka to Ramanuja is the transition from Bhedābheda to Visistādvaita. Brahman is alogical and amoral, as it transcends reason, and Vedantic exposition is often clothed in symbology and analogical ideas. For the rope-snake analogy employed by the Māyāvādin, Bhāskara uses the example of ākāsa in its unconditioned and conditioned aspects, or the spider and its web; Yādava relies on the illustration of the simile of the sea and its waves and Nimbarka, on the closing and disclosing of the snake's body. Rāmānuja thinks of the analogy of light and luminosity or the relation between sarīra and sarīrin as the most appropriate analogy that brings out the nature of Brahman and its relation to the world of cit and acit. In the tradition of absolutism in the west, the being of Parmenides is like the nirguna Brahman of S'ankara, the One of Plotinus reminds us of the sat of Bhāskara, the substance of Spinoza suggests a similar trend of thought in Yadava and the ego of Fitchte marks a definite transition from the indeterminate to the determinate, from the vague concepts of Being, One and Substance to the clear idea of the self. In this way, the history of philosophy in the east and the west discloses by its method of selfcriticism, the inner truth that the metaphysical sat which is the one without a second is the supreme self of all beings, and that the absolute of philosophy is the God of religion.

Rāmānuja clinches the whole argument by the classical statement of his siddhānta which may be stated in his own words. "Brahman is at all times differentiated by the sentient and non-sentient beings that constitute its body, and it can be said to be one only without a second previous to creation. At that time, the differentiation of names and forms did not exist. That which makes the difference between plurality

and unity is the presence or absence of differentiation through names and forms. Says the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad: Now all this was undifferentiated. It became differentiated by name and form.' Those who hold that the finite self is due to nescience and those who hold it to be due to a real limiting adjunct and those who hold that Brahman, whose essential nature is mere being, assumes by itself the threefold form of enjoying subjects, objects of enjoyment and supreme ruler-all the three of them explain the unity of Brahman in the bralava or dissolution state only on the basis of the absence of differentiation by name and form. According to all the three, there is no absolute unity at any time for the potentiality of nescience, the limiting adjunct, or of the threefold distinction of subjects and objects of experience, and their ruler persists in the pralaya state also. There is, however, the following difference among the several views. The first implies that Brahman itself is under the illusive influence of beginningless avidyā. The second says that Brahman is itself in the state of bondage owing to the real and beginningless limiting adjunct. According to the third view, Brahman itself assumes different forms and experiences the unpleasant consequences of karma. But, according to our view, Brahman has for its body all sentient and non-sentient beings in the subtle and in the gross state. In the effected as well as in the causal condition, it is free from all shadow of imperfection. and is an infinity of perfections. All imperfection and suffering and all change belong not to Brahman, but only to the sentient and non-sentient beings which are its modes. This view removes all difficulties." How the absolute divides itself into finite centres may be a riddle of thought or a mystery, but that it does so is a fact to the mumuksu and

<sup>1</sup> Srī Bhāsya, II. iii. 18.

Visiṣṭādvaita explains it in terms of the making of sentient beings into muktas.

The author of the Vedānta Sūtras is a synoptic philosopher who identifies Brahman as the cosmological ground of all existents. acit as well as cit, with the same Brahman as the spiritual goal of experience. The term 'cause' is not a category of the 'understanding' as it cannot be really applied to transcendental reality, but is a cosmological 'idea' employed to bring out the self-identity of Brahman in the pralaya or dissolution, and the srsti or creation, stages. The sat without a second is the 'unity of composition' in the pre-cosmic stage of pralaya. and is the cosmic self as the 'unity of manifestation,' in the systi stage. In both the stages, acit qualifies and embodies cit and cit qualifies and embodies Brahman which is the Self of the self. But in pralaya, the manifold of acit and cit is a real possibility. Rāmānuja accepts the theory of sat-kārya-vāda and denies asat-kārya-vāda. Creation is not out of nothing, but out of something. Sat is pre-existent and not non-existent. The possibility is so subtle that it is practically non-existent. Even in the non-dual experience of sound sleep which is said to prove Advaita analogically, nescience co-exists with the saksin as a real possibility. Possibility is said to be real when it can become actual. The difference between the two is thus only the difference between what is potential and what is actual. The term non-existence connotes the absence not of nondifferentiation, but of cosmic self-differentiation into the world of nāma-rūpa. There is non-division in the sense that there is no distinction of name and form in pralaya. In both the states, Brahman, cit and acit are distinguishable. but are not divisible. S'rsti is the self-differentiation of the absolute into the pluralistic universe of nāma-rūba. Brahman with the creative urge wills the many and becomes the manifold. It is the absolute that externalises itself into the endless variations of space-time and embodied beings by entering into matter with the living self and energising it. The cause and the effect in the Vedāntic sense are non-different and their relation is not external or arbitrary, but is internal and organic. Effectuation is not an illusion or a self-enveloping process of reality, but it reveals the inner purpose of the divine nature and enriches spiritual life. Brahman as the cause is natura naturans and is Brahman as the effect or natura naturata, as the Self is the same in both the stages. The world is non-different from Brahman in so far as it is the effect or upādeva of Brahman. The essential nature of Brahman is, however, pure and perfect, and is not affected by these changes.

Wisistādvaita as a philosophy of religion is not a mere metaphysical enquiry into the nature of Brahman as the ground of existence, but is also the spiritual method of attaining Brahman as the goal or supreme end of life. The first four Vedānta Sūtras sum up the wisdom of the Upanisads by establishing the reality of Brahman as the ultimate reason of the universe and by connecting such knowledge by the samanvaya method or method of co-ordination with the supreme value of life consisting in the realisation of Brahman. The wisdom of the Upanisads is the crown of knowledge and not its contradiction and sublation, as it reconciles the logical validity of the physical sciences and the value of moral life with Brahmajñāna and thus gives a new meaning to them. Brahman is saguna and realises Himself through His prakāras or modes, acit and cit. The scientist deals with the domain of matter

and explains natural phenomena according to the law of causation and the Vedāntin accounts for the events in nature in terms of brakrti and its barināmic changes. Prakrti undergoes essential changes in infinite ways and it is a moving panorama which is like the evershifting changes of the cinema. But these processes of prakrti are not mechanical, but are governed by teleological laws. They form a suitable environment for the progress of the moral self and its perfection. The self is subject to karma and undergoes moral expansion and contraction in accordance with the law of retribution and the endless variety of moral experiences accounts for the variations in the birth and status of the migrating jīva. Spiritually, the self is eternal, and it is only its iñana that is subject to adventure and has a history. The self can attain freedom only when it regains its religious consciousness and realises its relation as a prakāra of Brahman. The process of nature and the progress of the self can thus be understood only in terms of the inner purpose of Brahman. The universe is a place for making muktas. Matter is moulded for the making of souls. Brahman is ever pure and perfect, but it realises its nature only by entering into matter with the jīva for creating the world of nāma-rūpa and Brahmanising the self. The natural cause of barinama, the moral cause of karma and the cosmic cause or Brahmanisation have their ultimate explanation in the concept of acit, cit and Brahman.

Every school of *Vedānta* admits the futility of logical and temporal categories to account for the ultimate origin of the world. Time, in the phenomenal sense, has no beginning. When the *Sadvidyā* speaks of the world process, it refers only to a particular event in the series of systi and pralaya,

which is really cyclic and not a sudden creation out of nothing. The beginninglessness of the cosmic process is thus a logical mystery. But the Vedāntic schools seek to explain the inexplicable in terms of māyā, upādhis, pariņāma sakti and karma. While Māvāvāda and the schools of Bhedābheda with their parallels in western thought attribute, in the name of absolutism, the errors, evils and other imperfections of life to the absolute itself, it is the supreme merit of Visistādvaita as a philosophy of religion that, while it realises the sacred mystery and the wonders of nature, it traces the imperfections to the finite self alone. Brahman is immanent in the jīva as its antarvamin, but is, at the same time, unaffected by the modifications of matter and the imperfections of the self. This view satisfies the metaphysical demand for an all-inclusive unity and the religious quest for the pure and perfect self. It fits in with the grammatical rule of co-ordination or sāmānādhikaranya, which says that words having different meanings may denote only one thing. A term connoting the effect state of Brahman, including its modal self, connotes also the same Brahman in the causal state. 'The unity of manifestation' is the 'unity of composition' owing to the non-difference of cause and effect and the selfidentity of Brahman. Every term or thought that refers to the finite being also connotes the Supreme Being or Logos because it enters along with the individual selves into the world of matter for the evolution of names and forms and the eliciting of the self. The term sarīra connoting the body connotes the sarīrin or the Self which is ultimately Brahman itself. In this way the problem of the Sadvidyā, namely, 'what is that by knowing which everything else is known', is solved satisfactorily. By knowing the cause, the effect is known; by knowing Brahman, the one without a second, the universe of cit and acit, which

is its effectuation, is also known. This view bridges the gulf between monism and pluralism, and there is really no self-discrepancy at all as Brahman is eternally existent as the Self of all beings. It also satisfies the quest of the mumukṣu for eternal life. Mukti or deliverance from samsāra would be impossible or undesirable if Brahman is enveloped by illusion or conditioned by upādhis. Complete disillusionment or freedom would then be impossible as long as there is an infinity of avidyā-ridden or conditioned selves to get mukti, and no mumukṣu would seek a Brahman infected by avidyā or affected by upādhi.

Visistādvaita is thus the only philosophy of religion that frees philosophy from agnosticism and religion from dogmatism, and enables the finite self as a seeker after mukti to go from vişayajñāna or sense-perception to Brahmajñāna or the intuition of saguna Brahman. The Vedāntic categories or 'ideas' are different from the categories of thought, as categories can be explained only in terms of the self, and they bridge the gulf between phenomenal and noumenal reality. This truth may be explained by giving a Vedāntic meaning to the terms 'absolute', 'infinite,' 'whole', 'cause,' 'substance,' and 'subject.' The absolute that is sought to be known by the neti or negative method is not what sublates relational thought, but what resides in it as its prius and presupposition. It gives a meaning to the relative and the relational as its source and transmuting power. Brahman is self-related and is at the same time the Inner Self of finite beings without being affected by their imperfections. The absolute of thought is Bhagavān, the God of religion. Brahman is the 'infinite' not in the sense that it is quantitative endlessness or the infinite that is conditioned by the finite, and is therefore finite, but it is the infinite that dwells in the finite with a view to infinitise the self (brhattvāt ca brahmaṇatvat ca) and give it the eternal value of mukti. Brahman is the 'whole' of existence not in the sense of an aggregate or totality, an identity in difference or an all-inclusive unity, but is the immanent self in all beings and is pūrņa (infinite) and perfect. Brahman is the 'whole' of metaphysics and the 'Holy' of religion. Brahman is the first cause and the final cause of creation. The potential or the enfolded becomes the actual or the unfolded, and this becoming is the inner purpose of soulmaking. The cause is ultimately identified with the ground and it means that the form and the function of the self are rooted in the infinite. The self emerges from Brahman and merges into it. The seed of the jīva is sown in the womb of matter in order that it may have its fruition in mukti. The Vedāntic formula kāranam tu dhyeyah brings out the truth that Brahman is the all-inclusive whole and the ultimate home of eternal values. It is the ground of the universe of cit and acit that can be reflected upon as the goal of religious endeavour. Brahman is the substance that exists in itself and by itself, and the world of acit and cit is modally dependent on it as its abrthaksiddhavis'esana or inseparable attribute. The finite self has adjectival and substantive being and lives and moves and has its being in Vāsudeva, the Self of all beings or s'arīrin. The jīva as a ray of the supreme light of Brahman is its attribute, but is also a self sustained by Brahman and is different from the abstract determining qualities of Brahman like infinity. From the denotative point of view, the jīva is a unique being; but, from the connotative point of view, it refers to Brahman as its ultimate meaning. The visesana or attribute is a brakara or mode that is inseparably related as avinābhāva to the prakārin that is the only individual.

Brahman imparts substantiality to the self and makes it one with itself. Finally the term 'subject' connotes the Supreme Self which is the real subject of all knowledge. Consciousness stultifies itself if there is no self as the subject of predication. Brahman is the Inner Self of the subjects and objects of experience. The cosmic Self which thinks in all beings is identical with the inmost self of the  $j\bar{\imath}va$ , and this truth ensures spiritual intimacy between God and the soul. The idea of Brahman as the sarīrin furnishes the key to the meaning of Visiṣṭādvaita. This will become more intelligible in the subsequent development of the theme.

The theory that Brahman, the Inner Self of the jīva, is the same Brahman as the cosmic Ruler is well brought out by showing the unity of the subject and object philosophy. The philosopher who seeks to know the absolute may start with the self within or the world of nature without. From these two starting points he may be led either to monistic idealism or deism. The former begins with the analysis of the 'I', while the latter proceeds from a study of the object without. To the Advaitin the knowledge of the self is the main theme of metaphysics and it is founded on the psychological analysis of the three states of consciousness or avasthātraya. Knowledge is a transition from the external to the internal and from the gross to the subtle, till every rational thought is abolished in the super-conscious state of samādhi. It is a transition from the realism of the waking consciousness to the mentalism of the dream state, the presumed non-dual state of dreamless sleep and the Advaitic experience of the fourth state or turiva. The Advaitic method consists in dispelling avidyā or negating negation and affirming the ever existent. The self alone is real and self-proved and the object that is perceived, inferred or intuited is false and fictitious. The furniture of the cosmos is an illusory creation of the self and is non-existent. Isvara is the illusory highest and Hedisappears in pure consciousness. The ivanmukta who has realised the 'I' says: "In me all is born, by me all things are sustained and in me all things are dissolved. I am the secondless Brahman." "I am that Brahman which illumines all things, which is truth, knowledge and bliss absolute." This knowledge is at first imparted by the guru and is mediate (barōksa). It then becomes immediate (abarōksa). The knowledge is really no becoming, but is only a return to being. The chief defect of monistic idealism as a meremetaphysical enquiry is its tendency to subjectivistic quietism. The idealist as eka-jīva-vādin insists on the single self as the absolute 'I' which exists by itself. The philosophy of deism demolishes Advaita as atheistic and gives a fresh orientation to Vedānta by stressing the objective side and establishing the supremacy of *Isvara* as the extra-cosmic ruler. The object philosophy, as we may call it, turns our attention from the absolute 'I' as pure thought to the absolute 'Thou' as the extra-cosmic ruler. The cosmic Ruler is deistically conceived as the transcendent being that creates the cosmos by a mere fiat of His will. True religion from this standpoint consists in the knowledge that God is omnipotent and that the *iīva* is impotent and in absolute submission to His will by the feeling "Not I, but Thou." The finite will is reduced to nothing and the will of the Almighty alone is absolute. 'If God is, I am not." While the subject philosophy makes the 'I' the one without a second, the object philosophy makes the cosmic will of the Creator absolute and the will of the creature is reduced to impotence. Visistādvaita does not favour these extreme views. and it provides both for religious adoration and for mystic

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intimacy by its idea of Brahman as the cosmic ruler who is at the same time the Paramātman in the  $j\bar{i}v\bar{a}tman$ . The Chāndogya text "Thou art That" does not posit the identity of Isvara and jīva by removing their self-contradictions in the light of the principle of jahat-ajahal laksana according to which the jīva and Īsvara become identical by the sublation of the self-contradictions of nescience. It intimates the truth that Isvara, the cosmic Lord, is the Inner Self of the jīva and guarantees the bliss of spiritual communion between the two. The infinite that transcends the starry heavens is the same infinite that is immanent in the finite self. Thus the 'I' of the subject philosophy or the Self that illumines the jīva within is the "Thou" that is the Isvara of the object philosophy. This view frees the subject philosophy from the charges of subjectivism and atheism and the object philosophy from the charges of deism and divine determinism. And it is the philosophy of truth, as it defines Brahman as not only what is, but also what is self-revealing.

The practical Advaita of S'ankara dealing with vyā-vahāric reality has some kinship with the Visiṣṭādvaita philosophy of the absolute as saguna Brahman. S'ankara is often greater than his dialectical method. In his practical Advaita dealing with moral and spiritual discipline and the meditations on Brahman, he restores the ideas destroyed in his esoteric monism or pure Advaita. The same dual standpoint is noticeable in the transition effected by Kant from the Critique of Pure Reason to the Critique of Practical Reason and by Spinoza from the mathematical concept of substance to that of his ethics, dealing with the intellectual love of God. The transition is not a concession to the needs of the ignorant and the empirically minded, but arises from the deepest springs

of moral and religious consciousness. When mumuksutva is emptied of its ethical and spiritual earnestness by Isvara and His divine glory being analysed away, it becomes a barren concept and has no moving power. S'ankara, as a practical idealist and theist, came to destroy the Buddhistic philosophy of negation and agnosticism and to fulfil the faith of religion. S'ankara, the devotee of Vasudeva, who ardently adores Govinda in his immortal work 'Bhaja Govinda', and commentator of the Sahasranāma, who restored many a shrine, notably of Badarinārāyaņa, and who dedicated himself to world welfare, is greater than S'ankara, the relentless dialectician, who dismisses the world as an evil. illusion or dream, and its Isvara as a God for the deluded mind. *Isvara*, the cosmic ruler, who has omniscience and omnipotence is greater than the jīva with its nescience and impotence, at least from the vyāvahāric point of view. The concept of God or Brahman varies and develops with the spiritual development of the adhikāri or the seeker and when the concept is exalted into an intuition of Brahman, Brahman as such is apprehended. But the attempt to define God from the anthropomorphic point of view and state with an air of toleration that it is an accommodation to the mass mind is an unwarranted assumption and defeats the very purpose for which the theory is started. Vedānta speaks with one voice and not with a double voice, and S'ankara as a 'man of action' and practical mystic, as jñāni and bhakta, meditates lovingly on the absolute of the Upanisads as the God of the Gītā or Vāsudeva. Brahman as sat-cit-ānanda is and has existence, consciousness and bliss. If it is a negative definition and is a negation of negation, there is no meaning in the mumukşu seeking mukti. But Brahman is the highest self or Vāsudeva having the fulness of being and bliss. In S'ankara's practical philosophy, there is no direct criticism of Visistadvaita and if he had been fully aware of its spiritual significance and value, he would probably have been the Vedāntic precursor of Rāmānuja. In Gauḍapāda, the negative logic of the Mādhyamikas is more prominent than the positive. If S'aṅkara prefers, in his practical Vedānta, the positive teaching of Bādarāyaṇa to the negative logic of S'ūnyavāda, his view is not much different from that of Rāmānuja.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. 11, p. 465; vide, also Das-Gupta, Indian Philosophy, p. 494.

## CHAPTER IV

## ONTOLOGY I: BRAHMAN AS ĀDHĀRA

THE philosophic enquiry into Brahman as the supreme tatva or reality is the central theme of Vedānta. The aim of the Vedāntin is the clear and distinct knowledge of saguna Brahman with its defining attributes as enshrined in the Upanisads. Vedāntic philosophy is a comprehensive consideration of all sides of spiritual experience without sacrificing their integrity and exhibiting them in a systematic way as its fundamental truths. The truths of Vedānta are self-valid, impersonal and eternal, and they can be intuited by consciousness when it is freed from the imperfections of avidyā-karma. The philosophy of religion makes such intuitions intelligible, and evaluates them in the light of S'ruti. The philosopher thinks God's thoughts after Him in the light of revelation. These thoughts consist mainly of the metaphysical, moral and aesthetic qualities, which are the determining qualities of Brahman. Brahman is knowable by relational thought, which is revelatory and not self-contradictory. There is no self-discrepancy in the defining qualities. Metaphysics, morals and aesthetics are inter-related and related to the whole, and they bring out the nature of the First Cause and the Final Cause of all things. Brahman is the whole of reality and the home of all eternal values like truth, goodness and

beauty. Vedāntic metaphysics defines the ontological nature of Brahman as satvam (real reality), jñānam (self-consciousness) and anantam (infinity). Its ethical philosophy predicates goodness or amalatva as the moral content of Brahman as Isvara. Its aesthetics defines Brahman as sundara or the beautiful and anandamaya or the blissful. Reality and value are one, and the highest values of life like truth, goodness and beauty are intrinsic and eternal, and are conserved in the absolute Self as its essential nature. The metaphysician meditates on saguna Brahman as satyam, jñānam and anantam as the one ideal of life in which all ideals are self-realised. The moral philosopher seeks sanction for conduct in the purity and righteousness of *Iswara*. The aesthetic philosopher is attracted by the beauty of Brahman who is bhuvana sundara or the supremely beautiful. Brahman is thus defined as satyam, iñānam, anantam, amala and ānandamaya and these are His determining qualities (svarūpa nirūpaka dharma). Undue emphasis on one aspect to the exclusion of others is unphilosophic. It leads to the errors and evils of intellectualism. voluntarism and emotionalism. They are really co-ordinate values, and do not suffer from the errors of self-contradiction and the evils of subordination. The absolute as saguna Brahman alone satisfies the demands of metaphysical, moral. and aesthetic consciousness in their entirety and integrity. The logical and philosophical intellect starts with the trustworthiness of thought and ends with the knowledge of Brahman as truth. The logical leads to the alogical and is fulfilled in it. The intuition of Brahman is the consummation of reason. Likewise, the moralist postulates the freedom of the will and seeks its meaning in the goodness of God. The moral leads to the amoral and is fulfilled in it. Goodness is

¹ satyam jñānam anantam Brahma.—Taitt. Up., Ānandavalli, 1.

perfected in the holiness of God. The aesthetician is drawn by physical beauty and feels in the end that such beauty has its meaning only in the transcendental beauty of Brahman.

The Vedāntic study of reality as tatva relates not only to the nature of Brahman per se, but also to its modal expressions of cit and acit. It is, however, not directly interested in the bewildering problems presented by cosmology and psychology. The ontological theory of being or reality is governed by the religious need for realising it, because it is a philosophy of religion, which seeks to know the tatva with a view to attain it as purusārtha or the aim of life. The metaphysician is also a mumuksu or seeker after salvation, and selects the revelational truths of the Veda, which are relevant to his spiritual need, and specialises in the knowledge of the essentials of Vedānta. Vedic knowledge thus deepens into Vedāntic wisdom. The most essential truth of Visistādvaita (sāratamam) is the concept of Brahman as sarīrin and of cit and acit as His sarīra or sarīrātma-bhāva (the relationship of body and soul), and it is its differentia. It is the key word of Vedānta, which is therefore called S'ārīraka S'āstra, and it is as simple as it is comprehensive. It satisfies the tests of logical consistency, the Mīmāmsa rules of Vedic interpretation and linguistics and the requirements of ethics and aesthetics as also the needs of religious consciousness. S'arīra is defined by Rāmānuja as a substance, which a sentient soul or self can completely support and control for its own purposes and which stands to the soul in a subordinate relation. The self abides in the absolute, and lives, moves, and has its being in it; it depends on it for its form

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> yasya cetanasya yadravyam sarvātmanā svārthe niyantum dhārayitum ca s'akyam tacceṣataikasvarūpam ca tat tasya s'arīram.—S.B., II. i. 9, p. 15 of Vol. II.

and functioning, and subserves its end. Brahman sustains the jīva as its Self and inner ruler, and uses the jīva for its satisfaction in the same way in which the jīva animates and sustains the body, and uses it for its own satisfaction. This relation is known as that of adhara and adheya (the sustainer and the sustained), nivantā and nivāmya (the controller and the controlled) and sesi and sesa (the independent and the dependent), which may be generally called the metaphysical, moral and aesthetic aspects of reality. They can be analysed, but not separated, and the Visistadvaitic philosophy is the synthetic exposition of these foundational truths. Every school of Vedānta points to supra-sensuous and suprarational knowledge as its ultimate truth, and, in formulating it, has to rely on analogies drawn from sensuous experience. The concept of s'arīrin is a fitting analogical explanation of the vital intimacy between jīvātman and Paramātman, but it is only an analogy. Explanation is the beginning of knowledge and its end, and the full implication of this definition will become clear in the course of the argument. Brahman, the sarīrin, is metaphysically the ground of existents, morally their inner ruler, and aesthetically the beauty and bliss of life. The first basic truth of ontology that calls for explanation is the knowledge of Brahman as ādhāra and it is revealed by the Taittiriya definition that Brahman is satyam, jñānam and anantam.

The *Upaniṣad* defines Brahman as saguṇa and refers to its three ontological predicates of satyam, jñānam and anantam. The Advaitin, however, combats this view and declares that the definition is negative and lakṣana (figurative) and that it refers to nirguṇa Brahman. He employs the principle of

<sup>1</sup> Vide, Vedanta Des'ika, Rahasyatrayasâra, Chap. III.

avaccheda and sublation, and argues that, since determination is negation, the saguna idea is sublated or negated by the nirguna truth. When two cognitions are conflicting and selfdiscrepant, what is self-explained sublates what can be accounted for in other ways. Nirguna is non-dual consciousness which is self-established and saguna is the consciousness of duality and difference which is relational, and therefore self-contradictory. Abhedajñāna or the knowledge of nondifference thus sublates bhedajñāna (that of difference). The pramānas are a process of self-criticism based on the theory of non-contradiction and degrees of truth. S'ruti is self-valid and has greater authority than the testimony afforded by sense-perception and reasoning, and the nirguna texts in the S'ruti which teach non-difference have greater force than the saguna texts. They sublate the saguna ideas which teach duality and distinction. Thus what comes later in the Vedāntic development of truth like abhedaiñāna stultifies the earlier and less developed idea. Ultimately, Brahman transcends all degrees and values, and there is nothing that can be subsumed and sublated. The Taittirīva definition of Brahman as satyam, jñānam and anantam is negative, and is therefore no definition at all. The term satyam denies the temporal and phenomenal nature of Brahman. and affirms the absolute as the sat without a second The term inanam refutes the ultimate reality of matter or acit and the term anantam negates the limitations of space and time. These three terms are not synonymous, as they controvert the three different states of empirical and illusive experience of anrta, jada and vicchinna. But they have, in the light of the linguistic rule of sāmānādhikaranya, one meaning and only one meaning. The unity of judgment is not a unity

<sup>1</sup> Srī Bhāsya, I. i. 1, p. 19.

underlying difference or a whole consisting of parts, as unity cannot co-exist with difference. The copula in the judgment "Brahman is satyam" implies absolute identity. Bare difference is unthinkable and sterile, and identity in difference as the identity of opposites or distincts is self-contradictory. S'ruti is clear that the man who perceives difference suffers from delusion and subjects himself to death. Advaita, therefore, declares that pure consciousness alone is real and that it cannot be sublated. Nirvisesa cinmātra or absolute thought is self-established and not sublated, and whatever is savisesa or determinate is sublatable and therefore unreal. It is the purpose of Vedāntic philosophy to refute the dualistic views and destroy nescience. By negating the false, the true is virtually affirmed. Nirguna Brahman is self-proved and avidvā is self-stultified, and the false jīva dies a nameless death in the spaceless expanse of eternal and boundless bliss. Jīvahood alone disappears; the jīva does not die.

Bhedābheda joins issue with Māyāvāda in its exposition of the Taittirīya text, and its polemical warfare with Advaita is more relentless than the classical criticism of avidyā by Rāmānuja known as saptavidha anupapatti. Bhedābheda is as keenly interested in combating the nirguna theory as in constructing the theory of saguna Brahman. Bhedābheda has no sympathy with a dialectic philosophy which mercilessly destroys other theories without any constructive theory of its own, and which, when placed on the horns of a dilemma, takes refuge in the theory of anirvacanīyatva which is confessedly no theory at all. Every vākya or word has some meaning, and if māyā or avidyā is anirvacanīya, it is neither bhāva (existent) nor abhāva (non-existent), and it explains nothing. Then there is no Māyāvāda or Advaitic explanation at all. The Māvāvādin

dichotomises reality firstly into the saksin and the jīva, secondly, identity consciousness and cosmic nescience, and thirdly, the transcendental one and the phenomenal many, and this duality ends in an unbridgeable dualism. The first theory slides into subjectivism, the second into pan-illusionism and the third, into agnosticism. The rationalist rejects scriptural authority, vyāvahārika satya and the idea of Īsvara, and seeks the knowledge of the 'I' or prajñāna or witnessing self. But he lapses into the error of solipsism, the evils of egoism, and the perils of quietism. The illusion theory makes māyā envelop Brahman and Isvara, the first figment of cosmic nescience. A magnified samsārin seeking sarvamukti then becomes a makebelieve. Māvā does not predicate falsity to the absolute, nor is it false predication, as the *upādhi* or limiting circumstance is real and not a baseless fabrication. Illusion is a fact of experience, and it is not true that the fact of illusion is an illusion. The phenomenon theory is more realistic, but its view of Isvara as a conceptual reading of the absolute caught in the contradictions of the subject-object relation does no justice to the autonomy of religious consciousness. self-contradiction of relational thought infects reality, and the creator becomes the very crown of such contradictions. His omniscience is nescience on a cosmic scale. The only way of avoiding the discrepancies of the contradiction theory is to accept ajātavāda and deny philosophy itself or retrace the steps and follow the way of saguna Brahman. Bhedābheda accepts the theory of predication as an affirmation of reality. It defines Brahman as a super-personal self with metaphysical. moral and spiritual perfections. Brahman is the unconditioned; but it limits itself by its real upādhis and becomes the conditioned. It is the one Being that becomes God and the finite centres. Though cosmologically Brahman becomes the

universe by its limiting adjuncts and parināma s'akti, it is spiritually perfect and has the attributes of satyam, jñānam and anantam.

Rāmānuja also repudiates and rejects the Māyāvāda view of Brahman as nirvisesa cinmātra or pure consciousness. and concludes that Brahman is saguna and savisesa. having the ontological predicates of satyam, jñānam and anantam. To thought belongs the quality of thought and selfluminosity. There is no self-contradiction in the subjectobject consciousness. The relation between the subject and the object is between distincts and not opposites. The theory of sublation applies only to contradictories and not to distincts. In the spatial and temporal order, each thing has its own and distinct position, and there is no contradiction in the relation between a jar and a piece of cloth.' Likewise it is meaningless to say that youth contradicts the manhood of a person in social life. One man Devadatta does not contradict another person Yajñadatta. Distincts become opposites only when they are predicated of the same thing, at the same time, in the same sense. Even the principle of sublation presupposes the distinction between what sublates and what is sublated, and no iñana is known to sublate itself. The real can be known through the real, but never through the unreal. If pure consciousness as anubhūti or experience is self-proved. it means that it has the quality of being self-proved, as proof is a relational way of thought. But if it is not proved, it is non-existent like the flower in the sky. Negation is not nothingness, but is significant, and meaning is meaning for a self. Consciousness is thus the attribute of the conscious self. The self is essentially intelligent or cid-rūpa and has caitanya

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Srī Bhāṣya, I. i. 1. p. 30.

or consciousness for its quality, and is not mere being or nirvisesa cinmātra or indeterminate consciousness. thus precedes and presupposes the experience of the self. To say that the moment the self knows itself as the 'I', it is entangled in the not-self and negation enters into its being and contradicts it, is the negation of consciousness itself. Selfknowledge presupposes self-consciousness or awareness in the ordinary way. Self-positing is the positing of the self and there is no oppositing in the process. The 'I' does not pose and oppose itself with a view to repose in itself. If ajñāna or illusion ever gnaws at the root of self-consciousness and changes the self into the non-self, knowledge would be a process of selfdeception and not self-revelation. Then jñāna and ajñāna will produce each other, leading to the fallacy of see-saw and infinite regress, and disillusionment will never be complete, till there is jīvanmukti of all the jīvas and Īsvara-mukti. Advaita will be on safe ground if it trusts Vedāntic authority and follows the way of saguna Brahman as the logical and intuitional highest, and then it will go hand in hand with Visistādvaita. Rāmānuja accepts the logic of Bhedābheda that proves the reality of saguna Brahman, but condemns its ethics which traces the imperfections of life to the bheda element in Brahman. Saguna Brahman has dharmabhūtajñāna, which is eternal and all-pervasive unlike that of the finite self and is not featureless. Rāmānuja gives a new orientation to Vedāntic thought by insisting on the co-ordination of logical, ethical and aesthetic experiences. Several attributes, which are non-contradictory, may define the same reality by distinguishing it from other objects, and the plurality of these qualities does not mean the plurality of the object defined. Reality is qualified by plurality, but is not itself plural. The qualities co-exist as distincts and as the ways

of knowing Brahman. Thus the Infinite shines by itself with its infinite radiations and these radiations enhance the glory of the self-effulgent absolute. Saguna Brahman has an infinity of perfections of which some are defining qualities (svarūpa nirūpaka dharma) and the others are derived from the definition (nirūpita svarūpaka viseṣaṇa). Of the five essential attributes of Brahman already mentioned are the metaphysical ideas of satyam, jñānam and anantam. Amalatva or holiness is the ethical perfection of Brahman or Bhagavān, and ānanda brings out His aesthetic nature. The metaphysical qualities will be first considered in their due order.

## BRAHMAN AS SATYAM

The definition of Brahman as satyam brings out its nature as the absolutely unconditioned reality, and distinguishes it from the conditioned reals of cit and acit. The philosophy of acit or prakrti is explained by the scientific and cosmological law of causation known as the satkārya vāda or parināma vāda, which affirms the non-difference of cause and effect. This view is opposed to the theories of asatkārva vāda, which explains the effect as creation out of nothing; to vivarta vāda, which makes it an illusory appearance; and also to the parinama vada of the Sānkhya which refers only to the evolution of prakrti and ignores the progress of purusa and the inner purpose of Purusottama. It affirms the truth that the cause was pre-existent and not non-existent, and that the effect brings out the continuity, and does not betray any self-contradiction. What is non-existent cannot become the existent and what exists cannot be unreal. A substance enters

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S'rī Bhāṣya, I. i. 2, p. 123,

into different states in succession. What passes away is the substance in its previous state or avastha and what comes into being is the same substance in its subsequent state as effect. It is the identical object that changes and the plurality of changes is the outcome of the primal unity of the thing. Parināma is a perpetual unfolding of what is enfolded. It is the potential or implicit alone that becomes the actual or explicit. The one physical substance, clay, enters into many states, like pots and pitchers, and is their immanent cause or upādāna kāraņa. The same prāņa has biological variations of form as well as function. The same mind has varied psychic presentations. Devadatta changes from day to day and yet he is identical with himself. Such continuity, which is physical, biological, psychical and historical, does not show any opposition between one state and another. The son does not contradict the mother, manhood does not sublate youth, nor do lovers stultify themselves. Development thus brings out the inner value of the thing and does not suffer from self-discrepancy. Prakṛti is subject to the law of parināma and evolves into the ever-changing phenomenal universe. Matter is not merely what is, but what becomes, and is a series of particular perishing presentations. It is a perpetually fleeting flux without any stability. Each object is fugitive, passes over into different states, and each later state is out of connection with the earlier one. Things in the spatial world come and go in quick succession. Events in the temporal order likewise vary and vanish. The body is subject to mobility, metabolism and katabolism. One form of energy is transformed into another, and the psychic process is a stream of momentary modifications, and no thought repeats itself. Thus every phenomenon, physical as well as psychical, is happening by way of cause and effect. It combines and dissolves again. It happens and then disappears. Thus what is static is dynamic and endless becoming or duration. The wheel of becoming moves without beginning and end and without intermission. But this idea of an everchanging universe is opposed to the Buddhistic theory of momentariness, wherein there is no stable substance. Change implies self-maintenance and dynamic stability. If everything lasts only for a moment, life would become impossible, and there would be no social order. Prakrti is not pure passivity or non-being, nor is its movement the outcome of the strife of the opposites of pure being and non-being. Prakrti is eternally real, but its primal unity is in constant change and it never stands still. It is the perpetual that changes. The pralaya state is the reverse order of systi in which each effect is reabsorbed into its immediate cause. S'rsti and pralaya thus succeed each other in endless cyclic order. In the causal state sat is subtle and undifferentiated; but in the effect state it evolves itself into the infinite variety of nāma rūpa. This account is different from the Brahma-barināma-vāda of the Bhedābhedavādin, as, according to the former, Brahman is ever pure and matter alone is mutable.

While prakṛti exists for consciousness and not in the medium of consciousness and is therefore jaḍa¹ and parāk, ātman is the self-conscious subject or pratyak, and is different from the psycho-physical organism or sarīra consisting of the body, the indriyas, manas and prāṇas, the categories of prakṛti. This view is opposed to the materialism of the Cārvākas, the vitalism of the prāṇaists, the mentalism of the Buddhists and the idealism of the monists. The ātman is not the aggregate

¹ Vedānta Des'ika, "parata eva bhāsamānam jadam"—Yatīndramata Dīpika, sec. 57.

of physical changes, nor a stream of perishing psychic presentations, nor an element of the absolute, but is an eternal self persevering in its own being. Though the jīva is monadic, its iñana is infinite, and all jīvas are equal in so far as their nature consists of pure consciousness. The idealistic contention that matter is congealed or concealed spirit and that mind is a grade caught up in a higher unity that overcomes the antithesis between the two favours subjectivism. The self is the subject of consciousness and is distinct from the body; but, in the empirical state of samsāra, its jñāna is obscured and limited by avidyā-karma. It falsely identifies itself with the body, becomes ahankāra and subjects itself to endless psychophysical changes, and is caught up in the wheel of samsāra. It is subject to the moral law of karma, and since virtue is knowledge, it is exalted by good conduct and frees itself from the consciousness of exclusiveness. While the modifications (parināma) of matter are changes of its essential nature, the moral experiences of the jīva determined by its karma affect only its  $j\tilde{n}ana$  and not the  $j\tilde{v}a$  which is essentially free. The hazards and hardships of moral adventure have no beginning and cannot be causally accounted for.

Both acit and cit as the modes of Brahman have their being in Brahman as their ultimate ground, and are sustained by its inner purpose. The parināmic changes of pradhāna or prakṛti are not self-originated, but subserve the divine purpose of soul-making. Matter is moulded for the making of the self. Likewise the moral law of karma is governed by the supreme divine end. In pralaya or universal dissolution, the sat is without a second in the sense that cit and acit, which are inseparably related to it as its modes, are in a state of non-differentiation. Sṛṣṭi is the self-differentiation of the

same sat into the universe. The creative act gives content and outward form to the cosmic will. Brahman with acit and cit as its modes in the subtle or causal state becomes Brahman with acit and cit in the effect state, for, as has been said before, cause and effect are non-different in the light of the principle of co-ordination. Natura naturans becomes natura naturata. Prakṛti changes on account of pariṇāma. The consciousness of the jīva changes on account of karma, and Brahman wills the many and becomes the manifold, without being affected by these changes. The inner purpose of cosmic creation is the making of muktas. Prakṛti serves as the environment for the evolving self and Brahma sṛṣṭi or God's creation is for Brahmanising the self. The universe of acit and cit has its unity only in Brahman.

The definition of Brahman as the true of the true or satyasya satyam brings to light the full implication of the idea of
Brahman as satyam. While acit is termed asat and the jīva,
sat, Brahman is known as the true of the true. Reality is not
opposed to existence, and the distinctions in reality are due to
the relative values of the reals. Acit is a fleeting flux, and, as it
is a perishing thing passing over into different states, it is, pragmatically speaking, asatya or non-existent. The self is eternal,
though its self-consciousness undergoes contraction and expansion according to karma. Its essential nature does not contract or expand, and it is therefore called satya. It is not changed
by the evolutionary process of prakrti. Brahman is real reality
and the true of the true, as it is free from the mutations of
matter and the contractions of karma. As it is the most real, it is
also the most spiritual. Prakrti exists, but its being is identical

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Srī Bhāṣya, III. ii. 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., I. i. 1, p. 92.

with becoming and has no ultimate value. The self abides in its being with its essential self-consciousness. But, in the empirical state, its consciousness is limited by the free causality of karma. Brahman is ever perfect and supremely true as distinguished from the processes of prakrti and the progressing self with its infinite hazards in the realm of karma. The negative definition of Brahman in the Upanisad by the neti method does not deny the finite, but denies only the finitude of Brahman. Brahman is beyond the perishable and the imperishable. Thus cit, acit and Isvara have their own reality and value. The monist confuses distincts with opposites. The distincts may co-exist without any contradiction. The different states of the same substance at different times do not betray any self-discrepancy. They are not false (mithyā): or futile (tucca). Sat is the absolute or the unconditioned one without a second, and is the supreme self unaffected by falsity or error and untainted by falsehood or evil. When the nondifferentiated enters into the finite and becomes self-differentiated, it does not expose itself to the perils of the contradiction between being and becoming, or reality and existence. Every cause is a because, and the world is real because it is rooted in Brahman and is sustained by it as its eternal self; and the supreme end of the self-determination of Brahman is the moulding of the self. When the empirical self is freed from avidyā or karma, it knows its non-difference from Brahman and realises. the being of its being. The manifold distinctions of jīvas into gods, men and animals are traceable to avidyā-karma and when the feeling of distinction is destroyed in mukti, the jīva attains the nature of Brahman or madbhāva and has the essential nature of intelligence. The being of being (tadbhāva-bhāva) is attained not by the self-stultification of avidyā, but by the spiritual transformation of the empirical self into the essential

self. The predicate of omnipresence should be construed pantheistically in terms of immanence and the divineness of reality. The universe of cit and acit lives, moves and has its being in Brahman, and derives its form and function from its omnipenetrativeness. Just as the self pervades the body, Brahman vivifies the universe as the life of its life. Though Brahman is in space, it is not space or spatialized, or limited to a particular locality.

## Brahman as Jñānam

Brahman is the sat without a second, the self-existent and self-contained substance that is self-caused, and, at the same time, the creative source or unity that differentiates itself into thinking things and objects of thought, and realises itself in its infinite determinations. Substance as sat is not the negation of determination, but is its affirmation and the explanation of the diversity of life. The substantive is immanent in its adjectives. Whatever is is in Brahman which is its truth and explanation. Being and consciousness are not one, and Brahman as iñāna transforms the idea of sat or substance with differentiation into the self-conscious subject with self-differentiation. It has infinite consciousness which is unlike the jñāna of the jīva, and is never limited by karma. One who knows Brahman becomes Brahmanlike and realises its infinite intelligence or consciousness. The Vedāntin is not merely interested in apprehending the existence of Brahman, but also in comprehending its nature. It is not knowledge about Brahman in an external way but the integral knowledge of Brahman as the ultimate subject of experience. The supreme subject is self-luminous and does not depend for its light on any outside object; and is therefore defined as

jyōtiṣām jyōtiḥ or the light of lights that illumines the stars above and the self within. By the light of Brahman all this is lighted. There the sun does not shine, nor the moon, nor the stars. The self is distinct from its consciousness just as light is from its luminosity, and illumines itself and its objects. The self shines by itself as pratyak or self-consciousness; but its consciousness is not in itself, but exists for the self, and is therefore called parāk. Brahman thinks in the self and as the self and is called not only the eternal of eternals, but the thinker of thinkers. The absolute is self-realised and self-subsistent, and it is above relations, and yet it includes them.

Consciousness shines forth through its own being to its own substrate at the moment of experience. Pure consciousness as such without a self is non-existent like the son of a barren woman, and is undefinable. If it is self-proved, it means that it is the proof of some truth to some one. Thought presupposes distinction and difference and demands their ground or underlying unity. If there is no diversity, the intellect would, as Bradley remarks, invent it. The identity philosopher not only insists on the denial of difference and distinction, but also on the affirmation of absolute identity or pure consciousness that transcends or stultifies the subject-object relation. But identity is not bare existence, and the view of Brahman as Being or the highest generalisation of existence is the result of regressive abstraction. Existence

¹ tacchubhram jyōtiṣām jyōtiḥ.—Muṇd. Up., II. ii. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> na tatra sūryō bhāti na candra tārakam nema vidyutō bhānti kūtōyam agnih tameva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam tasya bhāsā sarvam idam vibhāti.—Kaṭh. Up., II. v. 15 and Mund. Up., II. ii. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> anubhūtitvam nāma vartamāna das'āyam svasattayā eva svās'rayam pratiprakās'amānatvam. S. B., I. i. 1, p. 31.

without content and character is inconceivable and self-contradictory. Absolute consciousness without the self is equally unthinkable. Brahma-jñāna or self-knowledge is the knowledge of the self as the absolute. The self is affirmed even in denying it, and, if consciousness remains self-identical when jñāna sublates ajñāna and sublates itself, it is equally true that the self cannot sublate itself. The dialectic that destroys the self also destroys consciousness and leads to scepticism. Self-hood presupposes and precedes self-consciousness, and the absolute is not 'a self-absorbing sponge which sucks in its own selfhood' and destroys it, but is the self-conscious being that is above relational thought and knows it is above it.

Brahman is eternally self-realised, is above relations and yet includes them as their pervading identity or self. Identity has different meanings: it may be bare identity lapsing into nothingness; or it may be the systematic unity of selves or elements based on identity in difference of the Bhedābheda or Hegelian variety, which is self-contradictory. It may also be numerical identity, which is a mechanical whole of parts or qualitative sameness which is only partial identity. Finally it may be personal identity based on recognition. The Visistādvaita view of Brahman as the self is contra-distinguished from all these views. If self-consciousness is an inner defect of thought which veils reality, it can ex hypothese never reveal it, and, if the self is destroyed in the process of discovering itself, there is no mumuksutva or desire for deliverance, or mokṣa or deliverance. There is no passage from the philosophy of nescience to that of identity-consciousness. The view that thought collides with reality offers no scope for escaping from its self-contradictions; and there is no spiritual hope of freedom from its imperfections. Identity in difference is an original confusion infecting systematic unity, and there is no way of ending the confusion. Hegel who aims at fusion is also regarded as the prince of confusionists. Discord and division cannot be transcended by the reblending of the material. The theory of numercial identity, which says that Brahman is the whole of cit, acit and Isvara, is equally inadmissible, as no mumuksu is known to adore a whole consisting of many parts. Mere togetherness, as in the case of tri-coloured cloth, is only an external relation and does not bring out the real conjunction or identity, which is the inner ground of content. Personal identity is, no doubt, a fact of recognition, as it recognises self-sameness and continuity; but the self is not a construction nor a creature, but is eternal and self-realised, and its existence does not require mere psychological proof. The idea of Brahman as the evereffulgent Self is free from the defects inherent in the other theories and is the true subject of the Upanisadic enquiry. The Self cannot exist without content or character. As the absolute, it is above relational thought and is at the same time the ground of thought. Brahman is conscious and has consciousness (cit and caitanya), and the two can be philosophically analysed, but cannot be really separated. The Self without self-consciousness is as inconceivable as self-consciousness without the self. The Self has dharmabhūtajñāna or attributive consciousness as its sine qua non. "Consciousness is either proved or not proved. If it is proved, it follows that it possesses attributes; if it is not, it is something absolutely nugatory, like a sky flower!" Consciousness is the attribute of a permanent conscious self.! In the judgment 'I know!, the thinker is different from the thought and the dharmin and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 55.

the dharma are inseparable like light and its luminosity." Where the self is, its consciousness is and there is agreement in presence. Where the self is not, there consciousness is not, and there is agreement in absence; but the negative test is really inapplicable, as the absence is not real. The self is the whole only in the sense that it is self-complete, and iñana is its self-explanation. Jñana cannot exist without the self as its ground, and the self cannot exist without jñāna to reveal it. Brahman is self-realised and inana is revelatory. and the attribute enriches the self and does not impoverish or attenuate it. The finite self has, like Brahman, self-consciousness; but it is contracted by karma and is mutable, finite and imperfect in the empirical state of samsāra, though it is really self-effulgent. Jñāna is the differentia of the self, though it has infinite self-expressions in the divine nature and modifications in the finite self. In both cases knowledge is of reality and not reality itself.

Dialectical monism is oppressed by a sense of self-contradiction infecting the very centre of Brahman and obscuring its nature. According to it, thought in all its levels is self-discrepant and cannot know reality. The moment Brahman or pure being thinks and wills to be the many, negation enters into it, and it is caught up in the self-contradiction of the subject-object relation. The knower cannot be known, as it transcends thought; but, when it becomes the known, it is infected by māyā or avidyā, and is the non-self or the object. Whether Isvara is the illusory highest, the first figment of cosmic nescience, or the conceptual highest made in the moulds of logic or the aggregate of avidyāmade jīvas, He is 'subject-object, one-many, being-becoming

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., I. i. 1, p. 34.

or the light affirmed in and through darkness.' His omniscience is nescience on a cosmic scale. When once Isvara lapses from the absolute and is objectified by illusion. He falls by degrees from the summit of being, loses His Isvaratva and becomes eka-jīva or the finite self. At first Īsvara exists conjoined with māyā, then becomes its creation and reflection. then an aggregate of individuated phantoms and finally becomes the avidyā-ridden jīva itself. As being-non-being, He is absolute-relative, and mediates or wavers between Brahman and non-self, and is finally rejected as useless. In the history of Vedāntic warfare between opposing systems, there is action and reaction, and while the uncompromising Advaitin, who seeks his inner 'I' as the only reality, avails himself of the dialectics of Nāgārjuna and Bradley to demolish Īsvara, the Visistādvaitins, especially of the post-Rāmānuja period, ally themselves with the logicians and the theists in demolishing the subjectivism and nihilism of Advaitic thought. Vedānta is not a dialectic that traces the process of self-deception, but is a darsana interested in the progress of self-realisation. The absolute is the self of all beings, cit as well as acit, as it is the highest and most real, and is not riddled with the self-contradictions of the subject-object relation. The knowing self is different from the known object, and is not opposed, confronted or externalised by it. The subject is never objectified by the negative element of avidyā and robbed of its reality. If the logic of adhyāsa or false appearance is accepted, ajñāna infects jñāna, the jīva is a figment, mumukṣutva, a mockery and mukti, a make-believe. There is no transition from the unreal to the real. What is called the non-self or anatman is not self-opposition feigning bare negation, but is a positive entity. When a mukta knows Brahman, communicates his iñana to another atman, and is aware of the world of

space-time, he does not, by the fact of that knowledge, become anātman or jaḍa. Non-self is not a negative term, but has a positive meaning. The physical object is out there, and it exists for the evolving self. It is the object in relation to the subject, which is a centre of experience without the opposition of the self or the non-self. Inter-subjective intercourse would become impossible if the other selves were anātman on the ground that what is known is jaḍa. If the self is defined as personality, Brahman is more than personal, as it is free from the limitations of prakṛti and karma, but is not impersonal. If Advaita identifies Brahman with sat and not sattā or bare being, then it defines Brahman as an entity and is not very different from Visiṣṭādvaita.

The term ātman has a specific spiritual meaning, which is not conveyed by the western concepts of spirit, self or soul. When it connotes the finite self or ātman, it refers to it as the eternal, essential self intuited in ātmajñāna and different from the empirical 'me' or the bodily self of ahankāra. The reality of inter-subjective intercourse and social life is affirmed even by the nānā-jīva-vāda or the theory of 'many selves' of Advaita and by the fact of transmission of Brahmajñāna to the disciple. Otherness is not hostile to the self, nor is the world process the othering of Īsvara due to His being confronted by the not-self or anātman. The ātman is distinguishable not from Brahman but within Brahman, and it is not shut in by a wall of externality or exclusiveness.

The true meaning of Brahman as Paramātman can now be brought out in the light of sruti, yukti and anubhava (revelation, reasoning and experience). The Paramātman is the all-self or Vāsudeva that pervades all beings as their inner self

or reason, and the sāstraic intuition that He is the universe does not equate the two as a pantheistic identity of the pervading self and the pervaded object. Brahman is in the world, but not the world. To the Brahmajñāni, Brahman alone is real, and the world viewed apart from Brahman is unreal and worthless. The absolute exists in the finite centres of experience as their ground and ultimate meaning. Brahman is not the substrate (āsraya or adhistāna) of nescience, but is the ultimate subject of experience in its individual and social aspects. To the spiritual philosopher interested in ātmajñāna or kaivalva, the ātman is also a self different from prakrti, and persists in all states of consciousness, including mukti. Even in deep sleep, it shines in its own light as saksin or seer with its jnana only, but without objective consciousness. The aham consciousness is different from ahankara or the bodily feeling arising from avidyā-karma that accounts for the contingencies of birth and status. In vişayajñāna, the attributive consciousness contacts the external object, and it results in the awareness of the external object. Jñāna is thus substantive and adjectival, whether it is Brahmajñāna, ātmajñāna or visavajñāna or God-consciousness, self-consciousness or worldconsciousness, and this knowledge enhances the value of Vedāntic life. If reality is Brahma-māyā, it is infected by allenveloping darkness, and everything would be jugglery or makebelieve. But if reality is Brahmamaya, everything is pervaded by Brahman as its inner self and throbs with its life and light. Brahman is the thinker that thinks in the self and as the self. with a view to imparting Brahmabhāva to it and perfect it.

The Visistādvaitic theory of Brahmajñāna is neither realistic nor idealistic, but is the criticism of both these

theories and their completion. The realist, who insists on the priority and primacy of matter and traces consciousness and self-consciousness to mūlaprakṛti, becomes materialist. Idealism is at the opposite pole to realism, as it explains the external world as a mental construction. All schools of idealism including subjective idealism, mentalism, objective idealism and absolutism are only refined variations of subjectivism. If the object-philosophy makes prakrti or nature the whole of reality and leads to pan-materialism, the subject-philosophy makes the 'I' the sole reality, and leads to super-solipsism. Visistādvaita reconciles these extremes by recognising the equal reality of prakrti and purusa as the expressions of the all-self, and evaluating them in the light of religious consciousness. Matter exists for the evolving self, and the self has its being in Brahman and has supreme value. Subject and object are externally related, but they are not external to Brahman who is their in-dwelling self. There is difference in denotation and identity in connotation, and all thinking beings and objects of thought connote Brahman as their ultimate meaning and truth. In other words, cit, acit and Brahman denote different entities; but from the point of view of content, cit and acit ultimately connote Brahman, as it is their self. The omniscience of Brahman as a metaphysical predicate connotes the eternally all-pervasive character of its jñāna in the universal and the particular aspect. Human knowledge is finite and fragmentary, and offers no analogy to the all-knowing character of Brahman. But when the discursive intellect is perfected, it expands into the intuitive knowledge of reality, and the self freed from the contraction of karma, has cosmic consciousness, and sees everything with the eye of Brahman. Brahman has the character of infinity or anantatva as a determinate

quality, which distinguishes it from prakti and the finite self. Brahman is free from all the limitations of space, time and causality, and this view excludes the perishing brakrti full of changes, the finite self implicated in prakrti and subject to the adventures of karma and the freed selves whose nature is not unsurpassable. Infinity belongs to the essential nature of Brahman or its svarūba 1 and to its jñana (perfection) and spiritual form.' The Upanisad defines it as higher than the high and as indestructible, and excludes the elements in their subtle condition. Brahman is also different from Hiranyagarbha, samasti burusa or the aggregate of finite souls known as jīva ghana and is free from all imperfections, which are attributable only to the empirical self. It is formless, as embodiedness arises from subjection to karma. Though it abides in all beings, it is not soiled or sullied by their changes and imperfections. The theory of two Brahmans involving the affirmation of saguna Brahman and its later denial is opposed to logic and life, as truth is one and does not admit of ambiguity and compromise. The negative method of neti, neti does not deny the finite, but denies the finitude of the infinite. The Vedāntin thus concludes that there is no being higher than the highest Brahman, and it is the Supreme Self that is the goal of experience.

The term "infinite" has different meanings in philosophy, giving rise to ambiguity and misconception. If it is the not finite, it is non-existent. If the infinite is what is not finite, it is bounded by the finite and therefore finite. If the infinite implies endless series without a last term like infinite space, time and number, it is indefinite and has no meaning. It

anantapadam des'akāla vastu pariccedarahitam svarūpam āha l saguņatvāt svarūpasya svarūpena guņaisca ānantyam. ll —S.B., I. i. 2, p. 123.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Yatindramata Dipika. Sec. 127.

is an empty generalisation arrived at by abstracting them from their concrete content. An infinity of self-repeating units is emptied of living contact with intelligence, and is cut loose from reality. When the intellect is spatialised, it dissects the tree of knowledge into lifeless sections, and delights in counting the leaves. Another view of the finite is that it betrays self-contradiction, and points beyond itself. finite is itself and not its opposite. It excludes the other, and is yet invaded by it. It exists through its other, and it is the understanding that treats being as such and non-being as such as absolute and self-contradictory. But the opposites are absorbed by the inner dialectic of thought in a higher unity, and then it is the identity of opposites. The absolute is self-complete and all-inclusive, and transcends the contradictions of relational experience by the reblending of material. Still another view of the infinite is that relational thought with its categories is deceptive and illusory, and the infinite stultifies thought or dual consciousness and remains identical with itself as pure consciousness without any content. Every category is, according to it, infected by avidyā and is ābhāsa or illusory. Cinmātra or pure thought without the opposition of self and non-self alone is real and non-sublatable, and the neti method is said to deny dual consciousness. When the false is denied, the true remains as a self-identity.

The term 'infinite' in the philosophy of religion corrects the tendency of thought to abstract itself from the thinking process or the pulsation of intelligence and gives a positive meaning to the infinite as actual and determinate. This meaning is defined by the idea of "inner plan and purpose" for which it is employed. The infinite may be the perceptual, the conceptual or the intuitional. The infinite of space-time is called the quantitative infinite. In the negative sense, it is endlessness and indefiniteness. The endlessness of an infinite series is a mathematical abstraction and is philosophically said to be worthless. Since the infinite is defined as the unconditioned. the quantitative infinite is condemned as a contradiction in terms. But the infinity of space-time has a positive meaning. As mere parts of a series, they may exist externally in conjunction; but as parts of a whole, they reveal a plan and a purpose. The particulars given in sense-perception may be disconnected and cause an endless fission. This is due to the sundering of reality into abstract units and the ignoring of the inner unity. What are called infinitely small and infinitely big are still concepts referring to space, time or number. Space is a totality and is real; time is a real process and is not an appearance, and the infinity of space-time is an ordered and orderly plan of creation, whose purpose is to arouse the sense of sublimity and wonder, and it has its own value in the religious consciousness. Scientific imagination is overwhelmed by the immensity of the cosmos with its vast stretch of space extending beyond the starry heavens and the Milky Way and by the immense sweep of time and the idea that the relation between a point on the black board and the known universe is the ratio between the known and the unknown universe crushes the conceit of man and inspires humility and reverence. This is strengthened by the puranic theory of endless brahmas and their age in terms of zons and yugas. The cosmic consciousness of Arjuna brings out the spiritual significance of the infinity of spacetime as a partial expression of the wonderful māyā of Isvara. The infinite of the mathematician and the philosopher is a concept, and is therefore determinate and not endless. The endlessness of an infinite series results from abstraction.

Infinite number is yet number and its succession is governed by that central idea. Bare thought may refer to endless ideal possibilities. But the true infinite excludes bare possibility, and the possible is the real positive concept. The barely possible may be logically valid, but really it may be void. When it is said that the finite world is a self-limitation of the infinite, it means that the infinite excludes mere possibilities as abstractions. Thought is not thought till its possibility is realised as an inner purpose.

The infinite as anantam is ultimately the quality of the absolute as a single experience. It excludes bare possibility and is determinate. Experience presupposes the experiencing self-The self remains the self even in transcending its selfhood, and it is above distinction and not below it. Even if the absolute absorbs the many, it should, as Royce remarks, be aware of this absorption. It should have the quality of transcending manyness. When I reflect that I know that I know and so on, the process is not liable to the fallacy of endlessness, as knowledge presupposes the self having that knowledge. There can never be a thought without a thinker thinking it. Thought reveals reality and has no lying nature, and it can find itself only in the self which it reveals. The absolute is the unconditioned and perfect, and is the supreme self or the 'individual of individuals.' It is beyond the passing shows of prakrti, the fleeting flux of time and the endless chain of causation. Brahman is in the phenomenal world of space-time, but exceeds their content. The empirical self subjects itself to the samsāric series of births and deaths, and has not the purity and perfection of the transcendent self, which is higher than the highest. The true meaning of the infinite is the eternally unconditioned and perfect Brahman, which is beyond the phenomenal changes of brakrti and the imperfections of the empirical self and the finite nature of the freed self. The three determining qualities of Brahman, namely, satyam, jñānam and anantam, differentiate Brahman from acit and cit. The first excludes the ever-changing world of prakrti and the evolving jīva; the second, the muktas whose jñana was once imperfect, and the third, the eternally free jīvas or nitya-muktas who have no cosmic control. Reality as Brahman has the quality of truth which is the True of the true; of self-consciousness which is ever self-effulgent as the Light of lights and of infinity as the Creator of creators and the Eternal of eternals. The idea of Brahman as the adhara of cit-acit is the life-blood of Visistādvaita. It affirms the reality of the separate elements but denies their separate reality and offers the mystic assurance that every jīva lives, moves and has its being in the All-Self or Vāsudeva.

## CHAPTER V

## ONTOLOGY II: BRAHMAN AS NIYANTĀ

THE metaphysical relation between Brahman and the universe of cit and acit in terms of ādhāra and ādheva can now be formulated clearly and distinctly. While western absolutists define reality as the all-comprehensive unity, the ultimate and the universal, they are not clear about the exact relation between the philosophy of nature, the self and their ontological significance. But the Vedāntic view of prakrti with its evolutionary changes, of ātman as the eternal self subjecting itself to the moral law of karma, and of Brahman as the ground of all thinking beings and objects of thought, has more speculative accuracy and spiritual value than the 'one' of Plotinus, the 'substance' of Spinoza, the 'absolute idea' of Fichte and the 'neutrum' of Schelling. The Vedāntic schools that refer to the universe as an appearance or aberration of reality or to the transformation of Brahman cannot escape the perils of acosmism and pan-cosmism. But the Visistādvaita idea of Brahman as ādhāra, with the ontological predicates of satvam, jñānam and anantam, has the merit of being philosophically satisfactory and spiritually satisfying. Reality and value cannot be separated, and this is clearly brought out by the further explanation of Brahman as satyasya satyam¹ and jyōtiṣām jyōtih². The term satyasya satyam

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Br. Up., II. i. 20 and II. iii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Br. Up., IV. iv. 16.

refers to Brahman as real reality as well as the true of the true. It is the source and sustenance of finite existents as their pervading unity and imparts substantiality to them. The sat has also supreme value, and, while acit exists and cit is real, Brahman is their supreme goal or value. The predicate jvötisām jvötih defines Brahman as the limitless light that illumines the physical luminaries of suns and stars and is the supreme inner light of the individual self. The sat as substance or real reality is also the ultimate subject of knowledge. Brahman as the all-self is the prius and presupposition of all thinking beings and objects of thought. The finite self has its own being, but its consciousness coalesces with that of the absolute. There is inclusion only of content and not of extent. The object exists for the subject and is not in it, and both connote the absolute as their ultimate meaning. Brahman is the subject of subjects, and it is in the finite self with a view to impart its being or brahmabhāva to it. Brahman is anantam or the eternal of eternals. The infinite is the unconditioned and perfect, and, while it is in the finite, it transcends its limitation. Brahman is the life of our life, and it pours its life into the finite to infinitise its content and to impart eternal value to it.

The metaphysical idea of Brahman as ādhāra is to be reinterpreted in terms of Brahman as niyantā. Philosophy takes a false step when it contrasts the 'pure reason' of metaphysics with the 'practical reason' of moral philosophy and explains experience as riddled with antinomies and self-contradictions. The 'noumenon' of Kant becomes the 'unknowable' of Herbert Spencer and the 'absolute beyond all appearances' of Bradley. If reality is a thing in itself, it is unknowable, and relational thought becomes a riddle and is

barren and futile. The absolutism of the rationalist thus leads to a blind alley and lands one in agnosticism and scepticism. The modern Indian absolutist goes a step further when he employs the method of Hume and Bradley and Nāgārjuna and explains the religious consciousness as a dogma and defect of thought. To the speculative idealist, God is confronted by the contradictions of being-becoming, lapses into the finite and finally disappears as a figment of nescience. But philosophical idealism often starts with the subject and ends with subjectivism. The identity philosopher uses the mathematical logic of equation, and, since conclusion and premises are identical, his reality is moveless and contentless and affords no scope for speculative enquiry or spiritual quest. If dialectic is employed to dissect theism and thought and lay bare their self-discrepancy, it is self-destructive and has a benumbing effect. Analytic thinking has a tendency to abolish the process of thinking itself and the absolute beyond thought may become decapitated and bloodless and lapse into the unconscious. Philosophy should, therefore, retrace its steps, avoid the pitfalls of mere speculative thinking and scepticism, and accept the trustworthiness of thought and the adequacy of the religious consciousness. To reinterpret Buddhistic negation in the light of Vedāntic affirmation may be desirable; but to misinterpret Vedāntic theism by an alliance with Buddhistic nihilism is to doubt and destroy the foundations of spirituality and paralyse the integrity of philosophy itself. By abolishing saguna Brahman, Brahman itself is abolished. In a true philosophy which is the philosophy of religion, the absolute of metaphysics is the *Isvara* of religion. The pure reason of metaphysics has to ally itself with the practical reason of moral consciousness and become the philosophy of spiritual activism. Consciousness is essentially conative and purposive. It is more an act of the will than a fact of knowledge, and Kant thinks that 'practical reason' has primacy over 'pure reason.' Reality is rooted in ethical experience, and it is ethical religion that takes us to the heart of reality. It gives a new meaning to Brahman by predicating the quality of niyantṛṭva to the inner ruler of all beings, who is absolutely pure and holy. Visiṣṭādvaita as a philosophy of spiritual activism defines Brahman as Īsvara who has apahatapāpmatva or purity and holiness as His essential quality.

The idea of *Isvara* as *niyantā* is developed by a criticism and reconstruction of the theories of dharma and nivoga as held by the Vedavādin and expounded by the Mīmāmsaka. Karma Mīmāmsa whose central aim is the elucidation of the meaning of Vedic dharma or duty is the metaphysic of morals. It is different from economics dealing with artha or the goods of earthly life and psychological hedonism which makes egoistic pleasure the end of conduct. Dharma is a supersensuous law of conduct or karma which can be established only by Vedic pramāna or the authority of the Vedas. The Veda is eternal and infallible and is the only sanction for the performance of dharma. The conception of dharma has its seat a priori only in the Veda. The Veda aims at some practical end to be attained by the will, and is not interested in conveying a knowledge of an accomplished thing.' Every fact of consciousness is conative whether it is sensory-motor or idea-motor, and it arises only as a response to a practical situation. Doing is thus prior to knowing and has primacy over it. Every sentence, Vedic or non-Vedic, is an imperative, and even affirmative sentences are only imperatives in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., I. i. 1. p. 107 (Ananda Press Edn.) and S.B.E., Vol. XLVIII, p. 149.

disguise. The affirmative proposition 'The sun shines in the east' really means 'Look at the sun shining in the east.' When a man mistakes the rope for the snake and is seized with fear, the fear is dispelled not by mere knowledge, but by the conative activity involved in actual perception. Disillusionment is practical owing to the perception of the motionless state of the rope, and it means 'Do not be afraid as it is only a rope and not a snake.' The important element in karma is the endeavour to achieve something and is not the end itself, and the Vedic ideal of karma lies not in the phala or the satisfaction of a desire, but in the moral law of dharma as a duty to be done. It is kāryatā jñana or the knowledge of what ought to be done, which instils the sense of duty, the will to do it and the overt act. Dharma is thus not a means to an end, but is the end itself, and it is a Vedic imperative of the form 'Do it' and is therefore unconditional and absolute. The only motive for the Vedic 'ought' is the moral feeling of reverence for the law.

'Ought' implies 'can' and the Mīmāmsaka insists on the freedom of the self as the essential truth of the moral consciousness. The very term sāstra means a command, which is freely obeyed by the ātman. The moral law is addressed to the free self, and the object of moral freedom is not the realisation of ātman or Brahman, as activity is more valuable than self-awareness. The performance of duty as a Vedic injunction is the only aim of life and not the Vedāntic view of apavarga or mokṣa. Karma is of three kinds, viz., niṣiddha or pratiṣiddha or what is forbidden by the Veda, kāmya or what is connected with a wish to be fulfilled and nitya or what is compulsorily prescribed. The performance of yāga or sacrifice is

kāmva karma and is a conditional imperative; it is a means to a desired end; but nitya karma like sandhyāvandana is a categorical imperative and an end in itself. The obligation is unconditional and absolute, and does not admit of exceptions. The system of Pūrva Mīmāmsa is thus rooted in the moral law of karma and the reign of dharma. The Veda is self-posited and eternally existent. It is not the utterance of God as the creator of the universe, but is God or Brahman in the form of sabda. The Pūrva Mīmāmsa does not need a beneficent personal God as the creator who distributes rewards. though it posits a polytheistic world of Devas. The term 'Devas' refers only to names. If Isvara created the world. He is limited by its imperfections and ceases to be omnipotent. If Isvara is, however, all-powerful, dharma will be dethroned by the arbitrary fiat of the divine will. The Mīmāmsaka therefore concludes that karma alone is Brahman, and regards God as a superfluity to be dispensed with. Even ātmavidyā which states that the atman should be known that it is so, is only an artha-vāda and is subordinated to the law of duty. Royal philosophers like Asvapati Kekaya and Janaka preferred the way of dharma to the wisdom of ātmajñāna.'

The right, as conformity to law, cannot, however, be separated from the good as an end to be attained. Every act has its own result. The end of good conduct is the attainment of pleasure here or in svarga and the avoidance of pain. Every act of karma leaves a moral effect which cannot always be physically perceived, and it generates a new super-sensuous force called apūrva or niyōga in the agent or action, which is a mediating link between the act and its function. If a man, for example, performs the jyōtiṣṭōma sacrifice, the act creates

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., III. iv. 3 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 688.

an unseen super-sensuous potency in him, which will in the future lead to beneficial sensible results, and duty is crowned with happiness in svarga.¹ It is apūrva or the unseen force that distributes rewards and apportions pleasure and pain to the agent in accordance with his karma. Owing to the plurality of effects, there should be a corresponding plurality of causes, and it is not therefore justifiable to trace them to a single supreme cause called Īsvara. Each cause remains as a potency which leads to the attainment of its result, and apūrva is the one eternal potency that manifests itself in different ways. The potency of the action takes some time before it produces the desired effect.

The Advaitin is dissatisfied with the Pūrva Mīmāmsa as a system of philosophy and goes to the other extreme of naiskarmya siddhi or the philosophy of non-action. The ethics of ritualism is mechanical and secular and as a darsana it does not solve the ultimate problems of life. While Karma Mimamsa concerns itself with acts of duty which are to be accomplished in the future and which have for their fruit the temporary felicity of svarga, Brahma Mīmāmsa has, as its subject of enquiry, Brahman which is eternally self-existent and blissful. The changeless atman falsely identifies itself somehow with the non-self or anatman consisting of the mind-body and becomes the fictitious ahamkartr. Adhvāsa or false appearance leads to aviveka or want of discrimination and lapses into abhimana or egoism, and the false self gets entangled in the duality of the doer-deed relation. Every act of karma presupposes the kartā or doer, and this relation is due to adhyāsa by which the immutable appears as the changing until avidyā is sublated by iñāna.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., I. i. 1, p. 110 and S.B.E. XLVIII, p. 153.

What is eternally existent, is opposed to what is to be accomplished. Jñāna and karma can never co-exist and it is only by sublating avidyā, on which the dual consciousness of karma and kartā is based, that the knowledge of the existent Brahman is intuited. The object of a karma may be utpatti or origination, vikāra or modification, samskāra or purification, and prāpti (attainment), but none of these four can apply to the case of Brahman. As Brahman is ever-existent, the idea of origination does not apply to it. What is existent can never emerge or emanate. What is is and never becomes, and the theory of moral progress betrays the inner discrepancy between being and becoming. Whatever is made or modified is fictitious. The ever-existent alone is perfect, and the idea of attaining something new stultifies itself. If being is not perfect in itself, it can never be made perfect. Brahman is the knowing self which cannot be the object, as the seer cannot be seen and the hearer cannot be heard, and even the metaphysical enquiry into Brahman as the object of thought is a defect of thought. Vedāntic thinking is mainly negative, as its aim is to negate negation. When avidyā is disproved and annulled. Brahman reveals itself, or, to be more accurate, is realised, and it is self-proved, and in mukti, the jīva continues as Brahman and is Brahman. To the rationalist thinker who seeks the inner s'āksin or seer by analysing away thought. the philosophy of activism is bound to be repugnant. When the Mīmāmsaka turns theistic and substitutes for nivoga or potency the idea of *Isvara* as niyantā, he does not improve his position. The idea of Isvara as the cosmic designer and its moral governor is honeycombed with antinomies and refers only to the illusory highest. No theist can explain how or why Isvara creates the world, and is yet free from the limitations of

creative activity and the self-discrepancy between human and divine freedom. It is more logical to affirm the self-identity of the absolute as nirguṇa Brahman than to believe in the deity of theology, whose cosmic will is ever confronted by evil and other imperfections. Advaita Vedānta is thus opposed to the theory of deism, as light is opposed to darkness.

The Dhyāna-niyōga-vādin accepts the Advaitic conclusions, but controverts its intellectualistic and ascetic trend. To him, there is no contradiction between the two Mimāmsas, as the Vedic imperative implies the Vedāntic affirmation. The imperative refers to what is to be attained and is unconditional. It creates the unseen agency of nivoga in the case of the worldly man. The seeker after mukti relies on the Upanisadic truth of Brahman as the one without a second, free from the dualistic distinctions arising from avidyā. The knowledge of absolute unity contained in texts like "Thou art that" cannot, however, be obtained by the mere cognition of the sense of Advaitic texts. The intuition of Brahman can be attained only by following the Vedāntic injunctions which have for their aim the meditation on Brahman. The Upanisadic text "The self is to be heard and to be reflected and meditated upon" insists on the need for Vedāntic culture and knowledge as a progressive realisation of Brahman. The immediate intuition is impossible without the discipline of mediate or reflective knowledge. Since avidyā is a positive something and not bare negation like the square-circle, it can be removed only by moral discipline and metaphysical reflection. The attainment of Brahman is not the logical stability of non-contradiction, but the spiritual realisation of mukti, which involves progress and perfection. Mukti is won by endeavour and is

not a state of sublation. The fear aroused by mistaking a cord for a cobra is not dispelled by mere cognition or logical sublation, but by the activity causing the direct sense-perception of what the thing before the fear-stricken man really is. The oral evidence of the bystander can never have the validity and stability of ocular and perceptual evidence. The direct intuition of Brahman can therefore be attained only by a process of meditation on its nature in the light of the Vedāntic imperative. The self should be heard and reflected upon. Intuition and injunction relate to the same subject; if not, the result is the fallacy of reciprocal dependence. Textual knowledge is the cause of meditation and meditation is the cause of textual knowledge. The object of injunction and the subject of intuition are thus one, and therefore, by following the command, the mumuksu attains unity with Brahman and is freed from avidyā.1

Bhāskara combats the theory of the Dhyāna-niyōga-vādin by his philosophy of jñāna-karma-samuccaya which holds that karma and jñāna are both necessary to the seeker after Brahman. He rejects the theory of niyōga as a fanciful and fallacious notion which has no Vedāntic foundation in the Mīmāmsa S'āstra or the S'ārīraka Sūtras. Besides, if the Upaniṣad stresses the imperatives of duty and explains away the truths of Brahman as merely explanatory or glorificatory (artha-vāda), then niyōga alone would be the supreme reality and Brahman would be valueless. If Vedāntic jñāna were true, it would lead to agnosticism and ritualistic formalism. While the non-dualist prefers the contemplative ideal to that of activism and favours the way of asceticism, the moralist of the Mīmāmsa type extols the supreme law of dharma as the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., I. i. p. 47 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 185.

only sanction for life and condemns the idea of abandoning activity as a lapse into inertia. Bhāskara claims to avoid the extremes of intellectualism and voluntarism by synthesising karma and jñāna by rationalising karma and moralising jñāna. If jñāna is immediate knowledge of Brahman, there can be no degrees in sublation and stages in mukti; hence it is both mediate and immediate. Karma is both for the avidvan and for the vidvān. While activity is the same, the inner attitude is changed. The former impelled by inclination and utilitarian ideas seeks the pleasures of life here and in svarga, which are tinged with pain and are ephemeral. But when karma is changed into niskāma karma (deed done in detachment) and becomes an offering to Brahman (Brahmarbana), it becomes one with jñāna and the dynamic element in spiritual life. Jñāna does not mean identity-consciousness, but connotes the intellectual knowledge of Brahman and spiritual meditation on its nature as saguna and not as nirguna. Brahman is thus the perfect self that is apprehended as well as attained. By His self-transforming will or parināma sakti, Īsvara emanates into the finite as cit and acit without abandoning His moral perfection of apahatapāpmatva or purity. The spiritual object of the emanational process is to transform the finite self and remove its upādhis or limitations of finitude.

The Nisprapañcīkaraṇa-niyōga-vādin¹ comes forward with his world-destroying view and says that Brahman can be realised with niyōga and by cosmic dissolution. The universe is Brahman objectified; and since what is originated is liable to destruction, the universe can be destroyed. When the illusory effect is destroyed, the cause remains identical with itself, and Brahman is self-realised when its effect, the universe, ceases

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., I. i. 4, p. 141, and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 176.

to be. Bhāskara objects to this view also on the ground that it has no sastraic sanction or rational justification. S'ruti nowhere refers to mukti as cosmic destruction. bralaya or dissolution, the world is, no doubt, dissolved; but such dissolution is not destruction, but is only the absorption of the effect in the cause. If the world order is, however, destroyed, it would result in sarva mukti or universal freedom, which is not a fact. Rāmānuja's criticism of the theory is more acute than that of Bhāskara. He asks the Niyoga-vadin whether the world that is to be destroyed is false or real. If it is false, it can be put an end to only by knowledge and not by niyoga or injunction. If the world is true, the injunction that seeks world destruction is either from Brahman or different from Brahman. If it is the former, the world cannot exist, as Brahman is eternal. If it is the latter, persons perish along with the world, and niyoga remains without a substrate. Besides, the theory does not clearly state whether the object of the injunction is Brahman or the cessation of the world. It cannot be Brahman, as Brahman is then something to be accomplished and not eternal. It cannot be world dissolution, as it follows from the injunction and the injunction is carried out by the dissolution, and this mutual dependence is a vicious circle. Injunctions cannot therefore have for their object the non-dual knowledge of Brahman by the cessation of the world order.

Though Rāmānuja agrees with Bhāskara and other Bhedābhedavādins in their criticism of the theory of nirguna Brahman with its consequent rejection of the Pūrva Mīmāmsa, he condemns their moral philosophy of the upādhis or limiting adjuncts and parināma sakti or the power of emanation or transformation. If the absolute conditions itself as the finite

subjects and objects of experience (bhokta and bhogya), it suffers from the dualistic and dividing consciousness of the upādhis and is infected by its imperfections. The 'immanence' theory has the merit of recognising the divineness of all reality; but has the fatal defect of predicating evil and error to Brahman. Brahman is both the supreme ground of the universe and the source of all imperfections and He has to suffer from the sorrows of samsāra in His own infinite way. The absolutism of Visistādvaita differs from the schools of Advaita and Bhedābheda in its insistence on the equal value of metaphysics and morals and the acceptance of the philosophic validity of Divine immanence and the moral value of eminence. Though monism establishes the unity of reality, it is constrained to recognise the fact of the dual consciousness and face the dualism between the one which is real and the many which are an illusion, and the effect of upādhis and pariņāma s'akti; but its most vulnerable point is its failure to realise the reality of moral and social experience and the distinction between good and bad. To Rāmānuja, the needs of ethical religion are as important as the demands of the dialectic method of metaphysics, and he concludes with the aid of revelational insight that the absolute purity and perfection of Brahman can be maintained only by affirming the reality of the finite self and attributing the imperfections of life to its moral freedom. The empirical life of samsāra is traceable, if at all, to the upādhis, whether they are mithyā or satya (false or true); but the true meaning of avidyā or upādhi is contained in the moral concept of karma. Ethical religion restates the ādhāra-ādheya relation of metaphysics in terms of niyantā and nivāmva (the ruler and the ruled), and defines Brahman as Isvara, the moral ruler of the universe who controls māyā and is not conditioned by it.

Rāmānuja repudiates and rejects the niyōga theories advanced by the Pūrva Mīmāmsaka, the Dhyāna-niyōga-vādin and the Nisprapañca-niyōga-vādin as mere mental constructions without any Vedāntic foundation and insists on reformulating the system in the light of the theistic idea of Īsvara. Niyōga is a mechanical device without any spiritual content and immanent purpose, and is therefore atheistic, and is to be reinterpreted as niyantā or the Creator and Ruler of the universe who dispenses justice according to merit. The motive of conduct is not only an imperative to be obeyed, but also a good to be attained, and there can be no endeavour without an end. The Mīmāmsaka himself (that is the Bhatta) admits this truth when he says that the Vedic 'ought' like 'Do this yaga' presupposes an end to be attained like the pleasures of svarga. Doing duty for the sake of duty will be formal and empty, if it is emptied of emotional content and the moral assurance that dutifulness will be crowned with happiness. The Vedic imperative of dharma, which is the subject-matter of the Pūrva Mīmāmsa (karma vicāra), therefore, requires reorientation in the light of the Vedāntic philosophy of Brahman. The end of moral endeavour is the realisation of Brahman and the attainment of eternal bliss. The ethics of the Pūrva Mīmāmsa has its value only when it is related to the Vedāntic good as revealed in the Uttara Mīmāmsa; but there is no contradiction between the two. The two Mīmāmsas are really integral parts of one systematic whole, and their object is to lead the seeker after truth step by step till he ascends to his home in the absolute. Rāmānuja. following Bodhavana, therefore thinks that the entire Mimamsa S'āstra with its sixteen chapters beginning with the Sūtra 'Now therefore the enquiry into dharma' and ending with the Sūtra 'From there, there is no return' has a definite spiritual meaning and value. The path of *Vedic* duty is the devious way to *svarga*, and its pleasures are particular and perishing (alpa and asthira); but the path to Brahman is straight and shining, and it leads to eternal and infinite bliss. The boat of the sacrificial cult is frail and leaky, but the way of Brahma-jñāna leads to the shore of infinity. The *Vedavādin* who follows karma thus realises its perishing value and tries to become the Brahmavādin. The transition from karma vicāra to Brahma vicāra thus involves temporal sequence as well as logical consequence. The seeker after truth goes from karma to Brahman, from the world of perishing pleasures to eternal bliss. The finite self which is essentially jñānānandamaya, self-effulgent and blissful, forgets its nature, suffers from the ills of samsāra, and finally attains immortality by realising its true nature and purpose.

Rāmānuja and Vedānta Desika illustrate this truth by the parable of a young prince who in a boyish way strays away from his royal father, enters the huts of wild tribes and identifies himself with them.¹ But an āpta or trustworthy friend weans him away from his wicked surroundings by reminding him of his royal destiny and succeeds in reclaiming him. The father who was searching for his lost son is overjoyed to meet him, and the two are at once reunited in love. Likewise, the ātman, who belongs to Brahman, somehow superimposes on himself the idea that he belongs to prakṛti, sleeps in and as matter in the praļaya state, identifies himself with the body of a god or an animal or a man in creation and subjects himself to the wheel of samsāra with all its hazards and hardships till he is made to realise his folly by a loving

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., I. i. 4, p. 157 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 199, and Rahasyatrayasāra, Ch. I.

guru. He at last retraces his steps, regains his self-knowledge, is freed from the fetters of karma and enters his home in the absolute. He belongs to Brahman and is, as it were, Brahmanised, and attains the infinite riches of spiritual sovereignty. The realisation of Brahman is an awakening as well as an attainment. The world of samsāra is not a subjective imagining like a dream, but an objective order, which is the same to all the infinite individuals experiencing it. The view that space and time are mental constructions and that the world is created and destroyed by the mind suffers from the fallacy of super-subjectivism and its fatal consequences. As admitted by S'ankara, there is difference in kind between the world imagined or ideally constructed by the mind as jīva sirsti and the world par excellence which is created by Isvara, and what is given in the waking consciousness is more real and valuable than that of dreams and of the inert tāmasic state of sleep and stupor. An Alnascar's dream is, in practical life, justly rejected as a folly that is futile, idle and empty. The analogy of the idealistic monist that the mumuksu is like the king on the throne who, falling into a reverie and imagining that he is a hunter eating and procreating like other hunters, awakens from the dream, may be adequate for subjectivism, but is not true to facts. Life is real and arduous and mumuksutva is not a make-believe, but involves strenuousness. *Īsvara* is not Brahman reflected in māyā, an eternal dreamer without any chance of disillusionment, a māyin that, as virāt, Hiranyagarbha and Isvara, suffers, like the jīva, from the hazards of the three states of consciousness and the hardships of cosmic evolution, but is the inner ruler of all beings without any taint or trace of imperfection, who is eternally self-realised and enables the jīva also to realise its self. Mukti is not moony effulgence or candrodaya that is an awakening

from avidyā, but the solar light (sūryōdaya) of sankalþa that is an awakening of God-consciousness by the destruction of avidyā-karma. Visiṣṭādvaita steers clear of the extremes of the Pūrva Mīmāmsa view of the mediacy of niyōga and the monistic view of the immediacy of Advaitic consciousness and regards Brahman as niyantā, who is the ruler of the moral universe and the supreme end of spiritual life.

The central truth of Upanisadic ethics that Brahman is the inner ruler of all subjects and objects of experience is brought to light in the antaryamin text of the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad as the answer to Uddālaka's question, "Do you know that ruler who is the inner controller of all the universe?"1 The immortal answer of Yājñavalkva is "That is Brahman, who is immanent in all beings as their eternal ruler, having the quality of sarva niyantrtva". Paramātman, the all-pervading self, is further defined by the Subālopanisad as Purusottama or the Supreme Self, who is eternally pure and perfect (apahatapābma). He sees without eyes, hears without ears, knows everything without the instruments of knowledge and the impediments of avidyā-karma. The antaryāmi vidyā of the Vedānta Sūtras 3 makes it clear that the essential quality of the sarvātman, the all-self, is the attribute of inner rulership (niyantrtva) and immortality (amaratva) that differentiates Him from the finite centres of experience and their objects. The all-self that can be intuited metaphysically as the ādhāra in which all beings live, move and have their being is now revealed as the immortal ruler. Sarvātman or the universal self is now identified with Purusottama, the Supreme Self of

<sup>1</sup> Br. Up., III. 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sv. Up., III. 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> I, ii. 19.

the universe, who wills the true and the good, and whose will is eternally self-realised. There is no other seer or ruler, and He is the Ruler of rulers for fear of whom suns and stars and the whole universe move, and the Devas do their cosmic duties.' Cosmic rulership cannot therefore belong to the nonsentient pradhana or the self-conscious purusa. In the marvellous figurative language of the Mundaka Upanisad "Upon the same tree there are two inseparable birds of beautiful plumage. One of them on the lower branch eats the sweets and bitters of life in turn and is bewildered by his own impotence, but the other on the top is the glorious Lord ( $\bar{I}sa$ ), the brilliant Maker who is ever serene and majestic and by knowing Him he shakes off his sorrows and shines in his glory." With a divine vision vouchsafed by the Lord, Arjuna beheld the cosmic form of Isvara and was awe-struck by its sublimity and infinity.

The idea of Brahman as the inner self of the self insists on the eternal distinction and difference between prakṛti, puruṣa and Puruṣōttama, 3 but denies their externality. Visiṣ-tādvaita as a philosophy of religion recognises the equal reality of the three existents, but gives different values to them in the realm of ends. Philosophy explains facts of experience as well as acts of will, and knowledge is not only what is logically apprehended, but what is ethically achieved. Reality is not only self-expressive but also self-determining, and there can be no self-directing activity without an active self. Moral

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Br. Up., III. viii. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> dvā suparnā sayujā sakhāyā samānan vrkṣam pariṣasvajāte l tayōranyaḥ pippalam svādvatyanas'nan nanyō abhicākas'īti ll samāne vrkṣe puruṣō nimagnaḥ anīs'ayā s'ocati muhyamānaḥ l juṣṭam yadā pas'yatyanyam īs'am asya mahimānam iti vītas'ōkaḥ ll

<sup>-</sup>Миṇḍ. Up., III. i. 1 & 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Vedānta Sūtras, I. ii. 23.

consciousness presupposes the freedom of the finite self and its immortality and the eternity of the inner self or Isvara. This view corrects the extremes of materialism, monadism and singularism. A philosophy of nature that makes matter the mother of the universe puts the cart before the horse, as it seeks to explain the reason and purpose of creation in terms of the non-sentient bradhana. Selfhood and internal rulership, as S'ankara observes, cannot belong to pradhana or matter. It is a materialistic view of morals to regard the self as a mode of matter subject to the determinism of prakrti and its gunas and the causal chain of karma. Matter is not a thing in itself as physical absolutism maintains, but is a thing for the self. It is not a projection of thought nor a non-ego, which is its opposite that resists the ego with a view to enable it to realise itself. The physical order has objective reality, but the natural ego that identifies itself with the physical world has no moral value, as it becomes the slave of sense and sensuality. Atman is essentially free, but it cannot escape the determinism of karma and the endless perils of samsāra, unless it realises its spiritual nature and attunes its will to the will of Isvara who is its inner Ruler. Nature is adapted to the moral needs of the self, and the moral law finally demands the immortality of the self and the existence of *Isvara*. The difference between the two atmans lies in the truth that Paramātman is eternal and the empirical self with its endless births and deaths can attain immortality only by freeing itself from the slavery of karma and earthly life. The Self as the eternal of eternal sand their inner Ruler lives, thinks and acts in us as the sarīrin and the finite will is enriched by self-donation to the supreme will, and its value is conserved and consummated in the absolute. While the self has its own being, it is deprived of its monadic exclusiveness by the idea of antaryāmin as the in-dwelling self of the individual. The absolute of philosophy which is the sat without a second is thus the same as the inner ruler of all beings distinct from prakṛti and puruṣa, on account of His essential eternity.

The non-dualist affirms the reality of the antaryāmin as distinct from cit and acit, but refutes and rejects it finally by denying the truths of practical reason and the god of ethical religion. Ethical religion may, he argues, be justified by saying that the atman is a person having moral sovereignty and not a thing as a slave of sense. But will itself is self-discrepant and superimposed on Brahman by adhyāsa or false appearance. While metaphysics deals with what is, morals deal with what ought to be, and if the ought is realised, the moral concept ceases to be. An infinite will is selfcontradictory, and the co-existence of two wills in the same body is inconceivable. The jīva is fictitiously hypostatised by buddhi, its false limiting adjunct. The very idea of agency, human or divine, arises from ahankāra or egoism and the self-contradiction between pure consciousness and self-consciousness and it is sublated by the knowledge of the self-identity of Brahman, when the will and its world disappear for ever. The Bhedavādin counters this absolutism of Advaita by arguing that, since the impersonal transcends the ethical distinctions of good and evil, it may be less than moral and that, therefore, the absolute offers a moral holiday to man. The reasons adduced by the Advaitin to prove the fictitious nature of the jīva apply mutatis mutandis to Īsvara and nirguna Brahman as well, and the nihilism and atheism of Nāgārjuna will be the only logical conclusion. If Brahman is beyond relational thought, it is beyond philosophic thought. and the monistic view is empty and idle. The Advaitin is

thus a light unto himself and denies what is alien to, or other than, himself, even if it is an inner 'other' as antaryāmin. If this be true, the reverence to the highest self or Vāsudeva, adored by S'ankara is strictly inadmissible as such adoration has no place in Advaita metaphysics. If the absolute sublates the relational consciousness and is the 'I' in the transcendental sense, there is no need in the mumuksu or mukti state for spiritual love and service which form the foundation of social solidarity, and egoism and self-culture may take the place of altruism. The Bhedābhedavādin accepts the direct meaning of the antaryamin text, but his view of the absolute self existing as the conditioned self destroys the purity of Paramātman. Visistādvaita reconciles the claims of absolutism and theism by co-ordinating the values of epistemology based on 'intellectus' and ethics based on 'voluntus' and defining Brahman as ādhāra and niyantā. The first category expresses the ontological immanence of Brahman as the upādāna kāraņa or material cause and the second defines Brahman as the operative cause or nimitta kārana stressing its ethical eminence and holiness. The absolute is the one that is the meaning of the manifold, but it is not infected by the imperfections of the universe. As the sat, Brahman is the all-inclusive unity or whole, but as the self or nivantā, He is transcendentally pure, perfect and holy. Sat is in space-time and not as space-time and is the self, while prakrti is parinama-ridden and purusa is karma-ridden. Paramātman is the all-self, but is absolutely free from the mutations of matter and the ethical defects of the empirical self, and is the Purusottama. There is none good but God, and the supreme end of life consists in attaining godliness.

The moral idea of Brahman as the Parama Puruṣa or the pure and perfect self, who abides in the jīva as its antaryāmin

or indwelling Self is to transfigure its mind-body into a living temple of the Lord or Brahmapuri, and brahmanise the jīva. The Dahara Vidyā in the Chāndōgya Ubanisad 1 enjoins the meditation on Brahman as the small ether within the lotus of the heart which, without a taint or tinge of physical and moral evil, wills the true and the good, that are ever self-realised (satya kāma, satya sankalba). This definition excludes the elemental ether and the finite self, and frees the Self from the charge of anthropomorphism. The infinite that is the abode of the entire universe has its home in the infinitesimal ether of the heart without being spatialised or conditioned and untainted even by a shadow of evil with a view to infinitise and perfect the self. The transcendental one does not lose its nature when it transforms the self. Likewise, the description of Brahman in the Kathavalli as the Person of the size of the thumb, as the Lord of the past and the future, that resides in the heart of humanity, is of the absolute that has no historv, but enters into history to make the mortal immortal. The infinite, therefore, does not lose its infinity by residing in the finite and redeeming it from its evil nature. There is no contradiction in the co-existence of two selves in the same body. If contradiction as bare negation or abhāva is non-existence like the flower in the sky, jīva-Īsvara is non-existent. Jīva-Isvara cannot be the identity of opposites as the opposing quality cannot belong to the same subject in the same relation. The monistic theory of a hypothetical entity named Isvara.

 $<sup>^1</sup>$ atha yadidam asmin brahmapure daharam pundarikam ves'ma daharōsminnantarākāsah tasmin yadantastadanveṣṭavyam tadvāva vijij $\tilde{n}$ āsitavyam itil Ch. Up., VIII. i. 1.

eşa ātmā apahatapāpmā vijarō vim<br/>rtyur vis'ōkō vijighatsō apipāsah satyakāmah satyasah<br/>kalpah.—Ch. Up., VIII. i. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> anguştha mātrah puruṣō madhye ātmani tiṣtati l īs'ānō bhūtabhavyasya.—Kath. Up., II. iv. 12.

anguştha mātraḥ puruṣōntarātmā sadā janānām hṛdaye sanniviṣṭaḥ—Kaṭh. Up., II. vi. 17.

which is the infinite-finite or being-becoming as a true lie to accommodate the empirically-minded, is unsatisfactory to the theist, useless to the monist and liable to the charge of srutahāni or violation of scriptural integrity. If the two are not contradictories or contraries but are differents, then an identity of distincts is conceivable, as jīva and Īsvara can be together in peace without being sublated and swallowed up by nirguna Brahman. The jīva realises its nature as ātman; it attunes itself to the will of the Supreme Self. Brahman is alogical and amoral and there is a real progression in spiritual life from the logical to the alogical or intuitional and from the moral idea of karma and punya-pāpa to the amoral idea of essential immortality. The Being that is beyond space-time as the greater than the greatest seeks its abode in the heart of all sentient beings as the smaller than the smallest in order to impart its infinity and eternal life to them.

The subject-object relation is applicable to ethical as well as intellectual experience, and the ultimate subject of every moral judgment is the inner ruler or Paramātman. This truth is elicited by the Gītā analysis of every act of karma or voluntary action into the five factors of the body, the vital functions, the mind and the conative sense-organs, the finite self and Īsvara.¹ The body composed of the five elements provides the physical foundation for moral life. The five prānas sustain the life of the bodily organism as without the prāna the physiological organs would cease to function, and the body would be dissolved. The conative sense organs and the mind in its volitional aspect represent the dynamic side of moral endeavour. The finite self with its free will is the doer of the deed and is the subject of moral experience. It uses

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> B.G., XVIII. 14.

the tools of action when it chooses to do so, and does not use them when it ceases to act. But the final subject of all action from the religious point of view is the inner Divinity that is in the self as the Creator of creators. The integrity of ethical religion is destroyed if any one of these factors is omitted, and the result will be fractional views of the philosophy of morals. The Carvaka or materialist like Virocana may regard the self as the bye-product of matter and the result of sexual selection. To him the gratification of the lusts of the flesh would be the supreme end of conduct. The brānaist may be interested in maintaining vital efficiency and in attaining physical immortality by a process of prānāyāma. To the psychological hedonist the motive of conduct may be the satisfaction of sensual desires. If the empirical self is impelled by egoistic inclinations, it follows the way of exclusive individualism and selfishness. The true aham or ego is the serene spiritual self as realised in the kaivalya state, but ahankāra or egotism is the pseudo-self of prakrti that claims to be *Isvara* Himself, but, as a pretender to paramātmahood. it betrays its ego-centric nature, fights against goodness, and seeks to destroy the moral and spiritual order of the universe.

The Manichean fight between God and the devil is really the war in our moral nature between the soul power of the atman and the brute force of ahankāra. When the moral philosopher seeks in the light of the Upaniṣad to become a spiritual seer, he recognises the religious foundation of morals, and discovers Isvara as the real Subject of all action. This discovery is more revolutionary than the Copernican theory that the earth moves round the sun and not vice versa. It gives a new orientation to moral and spiritual life, as it shifts the centre of activity from the little 'I' of ahankāra to the absolute 'I'

that is the real Ruler of the cosmos. The living body is the kṣetra or arena of moral warfare; conflicting desires fight for supremacy, the self deliberates, decides and acts on account of its free will, and knows the final truth that its will is the fulfilment of the Divine will.

The exact relation between human and Divine freedom may be determined by contrasting causality and free will. Science employs the category of causality to explain the phenomena of nature, and such causal determination implies necessity and denies freedom. On the naturalistic view of morals, the spiritual self is phenomenalised and subjected to causal necessity. The atman identifies itself with prakrti and is therefore constrained to obey the laws of nature. As its conduct is determined by animal inclination and not by reason, it becomes the slave of sensibility, and freedom becomes a fiction. But when the self realises its folly and knows that it is the atman and not prakrti, it raises itself from the scientific to the moral level, sheds its materialistic consciousness and acquires sovereignty over animal nature. Freedom and activity belong to purusa and not to prakrti, but, if activity is a feature of prakrti, then, as prakrti is a common possession of all jīvas, all actions would be experienced by all jīvas, which is absurd. The very term s'āstra connotes an imperative or moral 'ought' and therefore presupposes the freedom of the finite self. The world of prakrti is the common theatre for moral and spiritual life and it is really the object and not the subject of experience. In the transition from ethics to religion, moral freedom is transfigured into spiritual attunement to the will of the supreme Self. The self as the kartā or free agent becomes the willing

S. B., II. iii. 36 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 555.

The empirical self in a sense suffers from the dilemma of determinism. As a mode of matter, its action is subject to causal necessity and it is not free; as a mode of the highest self its activity depends on the inward Ruler who by His wonderful māyā moves all creatures as if they were mere machines. The self as a passive instrument of Isvara becomes a conduit pipe of His cosmic energy. This idea of divine determinism and pre-destination is forcibly expounded by the Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad. "Whom the Lord elects to lead upwards from these worlds, He makes him do a good deed. Whom He elects to lead downwards from these worlds, He makes him do a wicked deed." Freedom of the self would thus appear to be a fiction from the religious as well as the scientific point of view.

But ethical religion proves the fallacies of the dilemma by taking it by the horns, offering a way of escape between the horns and by rebuttal. The dilemma is taken by the horns by insisting on the ethical personality of the jīva as different from the phenomenalised mode of prakrti and the depersonalised instrument of divinity. Moral autonomy has its own intrinsic value, which cannot be explained by scientific necessity or the theory of divine determinism. The self can attain sovereignty over brute nature, and no one can subdue a man who has subdued himself. The spiritual self

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Is'varassarva bhūtānām hṛddes'erjuna tistati l Bhrāmayan sarvabhūtāni yantrārūdhāni māyayā. The Gīta, XVIII. 61. Vedānta Sūtras, II. iii. 40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> esa hyevaināmsādhu karma kārayati tam yamanvānunesyati l esa evainām asādhu karma kārayati tam yamebhyō lōkebhyō nunutsate ll

is different from the empirical self of brakrti and, being eternal by nature, it can neither slay another self nor be slain by it. Besides. Isvara is a silent but not indifferent spectator of the moral self, as He permits moral possibility, and the moral self has the freedom to grow into the goodness and perfection of God or lapse into demoniac malignity by choosing the way of evil. Duty is the command of the inner voice, and the imperative implies the obligation to obey it. The S'rī Bhāsya illustrates this truth by the analogy of the joint ownership of the same property by two persons, A and B.2 If B wishes to transfer it to a third person C, he can do so only after obtaining the permission of A. The grant of permission by A depends on the imperative, initiative and persuasive effort of B, who desires the transfer. Likewise Isvara permits its 'other' to use its freedom. At first a silent seer with ubeksatva (indifference), unaffected by good and evil. He enters into the moral life of the jīva, and permits it to exercise its freedom (anumantrtva). He then apportions pleasure and pain which are the fruits of action according to desert (pravojitvatva).3 Ethical religion also points out the way of escaping between the two horns of the dilemma by the doctrine that the self is not a thing or means to an end, but is a kartā that can choose its way in a conflict of desires, and not drift between destiny and divinity. It is not fated to follow karma or sastra, but has the free will to choose its own career. The whole argument of determinism

hantā cenmanyate hantum hataḥcen manyate hatam l ubhau tau na vijānitō nāyam hanti na hanyate ll

<sup>-</sup>Kath. Up., I. ii. 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. B., II. iii. 41 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 557.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Yathā dvayöḥ sādhārane dhane parasvatvāpādanam anyatarānumatim antarēna nopapadyate; athāpi itarānumatēh svēnaiva kṛtam iti tatphalam svasyaiva bhavati.—Srī Bhāṣya, II. iii. 41.

can be rebutted by saying that the moral realm is autonomous and cannot be reduced to the physical realm or religious absolutism. Ethical religion reconciles ethics and religion by its conclusion that the self acquires moral sovereignty over its animal inclination with a view to offering itself as a self-donation to the Supreme Self, who is the ultimate Subject of moral endeavour. The two wills then co-exist as one will, when the finite will is in tune with the infinite and there is no self-contradiction in such co-existence or self-communication. At any rate, this view is preferable to the illusion theory of ethics, which concedes that the Lord with super-excellent limiting adjuncts rules the jīvas with inferior limiting instincts, as it makes morality a make-believe and mōkṣa sādhana a semblance.

This chapter may be concluded by summing up its main thesis that Brahman, the all-inclusive One, is Isvara, the inner Controller of all beings. The ontological view of Brahman as the Life of our life and the True of the true stresses the idea of divine immanence which pulsates through all beings and sustains their form and function. Truth is an essential quality of reality and is not reality. The idea of nivantā brings out the idea of the ethical eminence of Brahman and shows that the finite is not only rooted in the infinite (svarūpāsrta) but is also controlled or directed by it (sankalpāsrta). By His entry into the jīva as its inner self He is at once the Sovereign and Saviour of all jīvas. Like a king that inspects the prison as a free man, He is the king of the dark chamber. He is within all beings and without, near and yet far. Owing to the unity of purport of all Vedic knowledge the terms sat, Brahman and antaryāmin connote the same Being. In the light of the rule of chāgapasunyāya, these terms ultimately connote Nārāvaņa as the Supreme Self.

## CHAPTER VI

## ONTOLOGY III: BRAHMAN AS RULER AND REDEEMER

IS'VARA is not the illusory highest nor the highest conceptual interpretation of the absolute, but is the ethical highest in us, and His omnipotence makes for righteousness. The will of the Almighty is not the arbitrary fiat of a despot, but is rooted in justice. S'āstra, the only authority for discerning spiritual truths, no doubt, attributes absolute power to Brahman which transcends human understanding. But the idea of Providence as a Being with infinite benevolence cannot be reconciled with omnipotence. It may be contended that this is the worst of all possible worlds, as no merciful divinity would create a universe so full of inequality and cruelty (vaisamya and nairghrnya). The existence of evil and unmerited suffering appears as a blot on the Almighty, and is evidence of the reign of a malignant power rather than of a benign ruler. This is a serious charge against theism, but Bādarāyana, the Vedāntin, meets it by tracing evil to the moral responsibility of the jīva. The inequalities in the moral experiences of men and communities and the injustices are the outcome of their karma and are not due to any caprice

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. i. 34 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 478.

in the Creator. The material cause of creation is, as Parasara says, the karma of the jiva. The law of karma is the law of causation on the moral level, and every man reaps what he sows'; karma and its juridical rigour are so relentless that not even the gods can escape the consequences of their karma. The law of karma does not, however, connote mechanical or mathematical necessity, in which each deed is the child of the past and the parent of the future. But it presupposes a free agent, who is accountable for his actions. The moral judgment is passed not on the deed, as the Buddhist thinks, but on the doer doing the deed, and it recognises the intrinsic value of moral freedom. When ethics develops into a religion, it becomes a theodicy with a moral and spiritual faith in the Law-giver. Duty is a divine command and its transgression is a moral perversity or evil that deepens into sin, and merits punishment. Righteousness is fulfilled in the law of retribution. The lie in the soul arouses moral disapproval and incurs wrath, and it is by punishment alone that the righteousness of the law can be vindicated. But the picture of a vindictive God who hurls the offender into everlasting hell fire is revolting to the religious consciousness of Rāmānuja. The will of the Almighty is rooted in the righteousness by which He dispenses justice according to the merit of the doer. Theology insists on the absoluteness of the divine will, and ethics on the value of righteousness; but ethical religion defines Isvara as satya kāma and satya sankalba, who wills the true and the good and realises them at once; and the view that God wills the good is preferable to the view that what God wills is good. The former makes Him righteous and the latter despotic. The idea of Isvara as karma-phala-dātā or the Lord that judges man according to his karma steers clear of the evils of deism

<sup>1</sup> Br. Up., IV. iv. 5.

and Manicheism. The theory of an external Designer or absolute Deity, who makes the world and lets it go, is as repugnant as the idea that God forever fights with the devil or that evil exists as an impediment to goodness to be finally overcome by it. The view of Rāmānuja that Īsvara is the operative cause and the karma of each jīva the material cause of the diversities of moral experience, satisfies the needs of ethical transcendence and logical immanence. Brahman as the sat is the immanent unity of the universe, and as Paramapurusa is transcendentally pure and perfect; the evils of life are traceable to the moral freedom of the finite self. The idea of evil as an illusion that envelops Brahman, an upādhi or limitation that conditions the infinite, or a defect in the absolute, carries no conviction, and admits of no religious satisfaction. A consistent monism should deny avidyā, if it is to avoid the dualism between ātman and mūlāvidyā and should destroy the plurality of jīvas if it is to avoid the perils of pluralism. Rāmānuja traces avidyā to karma instead of tracing karma to avidyā as S'ankara does, and he finally equates the two.1 The former view attributes the illusions and ills of life to the jīva and leaves the absolute absolutely perfect.

The ethical religion of Visiṣṭādvaita is rounded off by the theory of Isvara as Rakṣaka or redeemer. The idea of Isvara as karma-phala-dātā, who apportions pleasures and penalties in exact proportion to the moral worthiness of the kartā or doer, is a legal conception which affords no scope for religious consolation or hope of salvation. The law of retribution demands an exact mathematical recompense for karma,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Avidyā karmasamjñā V. P. VI. vii. 61 quoted in S. B., I. i. 1, p. 72 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 101.

as every act of karma should bear its fruit, which can be exhausted only by enjoyment or expiation. It develops an attitude of quiscent passivity and resignation to the inevitable rather than that of optimistic activism. The maxim that what cannot be cured should be endured belongs to the ethics of passivity, but the maxim that what cannot be endured should be cured is the ethics of dynamic activism. It is shallow optimism to say that whatever is is right, but the deeper optimism asserts that whatever is right is. Evil exists as a fact of experience, but evil ought not to be, and the mumuksu seeks to destroy it by active endeavour. Physical evil is equated with suffering, and may not be the effect of sin. Sin may result in suffering, but suffering may not be due to sin. But moral evil arises from the violation of a moral law, and it deepens into sin when duty, which is a divine command, is violated. Duty is the voice of God in the will of man, and it is a sin to omit what is commanded and commit what is prohibited, as it is an offence against Isvara. The sinfulness of sin is so deep that it cannot be exhausted by expiation. The law of recompense is an endless see-saw which offers no hope to the seeker after mukti, and it has religious value only when righteousness is fulfilled in redemption. Justice is not merely tempered with mercy, but is consummated in it, and the aim of punishment is not retribution but redemption. Dandana or punishment is dayā-kārya or the work of compassion. Punishment is for the redemption of the wrong-doer from his career of sin by the inflow of divine grace or krbā. Forgiveness does not cancel karma, but transforms it by the organic blending of goodness and mercy. The grace of the Raksaka is not a supernatural potency that is infused into the sinner from without. The law of karma finds its fulfilment in the redemptive grace of God. Forgiveness is the foundation

of the moral law, and redemption from sin is its religious fruition; and this view overcomes the dualism between the supernatural realm of  $krp\bar{a}$  and the moral realm of karma. There is no discrepancy or discontinuity between the supernatural and the natural, as the former is a consummation of the latter.

While philosophy explains the quest of reality by the self as mumuksu, religion explains the quest of the self by the Raksaka or Redeemer. The idea of Brahman interested in brahmanising the jīva is the key thought of religion. God seeks the self even more than the self seeks God, and He is aptly called the "Hound of Heaven." To the logical intellect Brahman transcends the categories of the understanding, and the absolute is beyond description and definition, but to the religious consciousness, He is the inescapable Redeemer who, in His infinite mercy, assumes suitable forms to recover, and reunite with the lost self. The ascent of the self to the absolute is not so valuable as the descent of God into evolutionary forms and into humanity. The five forms of Brahman known as para, vyūha, vibhava, antaryāmin and arca1 are not emanational categories but concrete expressions of divine krpā. Dayā is eternal and infinite, and it incarnates into humanity and is immanent in all living beings. Para-Brahman is the self-realised absolute as the Eternal of eternals, which is formless, changeless and transcendental (tripādōsya amrtam divi). In Paramapada, matter exists without its mutability, time exists as eternity, and the mukta lives without the moral limitations of karma. But in that divine life there is no scope for dayā and if everything is moveless and perfect, perfection has no

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Yatindramata Dīpika, IX. 129.

meaning or value. There is more joy in the pursuit of the lost self than in the possession of the free selves of Paramapada, and therefore the metaphysical absolute becomes Vāsudeva, the perfect, to satisfy the meditational needs of the mumukşu. İsvara as vyūha, with His infinite cosmic will, is the creative source and sustenance of the universe and is also the all-destroyer. The idea of Isvara as the 'eater' referred to in the Kathavalli Upanisad and the Vedanta Sūtras, connotes the awe-inspiring nature of the all-destroyer, whose wrath breaks forth on all beings, causing universal destruction. But really, the devourer is a life-giving healer, and what is popularly termed destruction is the re-absorption of the universe in the pralaya state, in which the distinctions of nāma rūpa caused by parināma and karma disappear, and cit-acit exists as a mere possibility. In the history of the adventure of souls occur certain epochs of moral crisis, when egoism becomes so inflated and sinfulness becomes so iniquitous that Isvara in His infinite mercy withdraws the instruments of evil and thus arrests the wrong-doers from their career of crime and sin.2 This is called pralaya and has a soothing effect on the self. Srsti is also a redemptive process and after the refreshment of pralaya, the jīva wakes up to moral activity, enters on a new life, and is given a fresh opportunity for attaining freedom. The making and the unmaking of the universe thus reveal the redemptive mercy of the Raksaka and cosmology is to be reinterpreted as a dayā sāstra

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> yasya brahma ca kṣatram ca ubhe bhavata ōdane l mṛtyur yasyōpasecanam—K.U., I. ii. 25. attā carācara grahaṇāt—S.B. I. ii. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> āṣṛṣṭi santatānām aparādhānām nirōdhinīm jagataḥ l padmāsahāya karuņe pratisañcara kelim ācarasi ll —Dayāsatakam, 16. acidavis'iṣtān praļaye jantūn avalokya jātanirvedā l karaņa kalebara yōgam vitarasi vṛṣasailanātha karuņe tvam ll —Ibiā., 17.

or philosophy of redemption. The third concrete form of  $day\bar{a}$  is the immanence of Brahman in the hearts of all beings as their antaryāmin without being affected by their evils. It transforms the perishing body into a living temple of the Rakṣaka and is capable of being intuited by the yōgi. Vāsudeva, the perfect Self, manifests Himself in the interests of the meditational needs of the devotee, as Saṅkarṣaṇa with the two qualities of jñāna and bala, as Pradyumna with the qualities of aisvarya and  $v\bar{v}rya$  and as Aniruddha with sakti and tejas without any dimunition of Divinity.

Avatāra or vibhava incarnation is the next concrete manifestation of  $krp\bar{a}$ , and it is the periodic invasion of  $krp\bar{a}$ into all species and into the history of humanity, when evil triumphs over goodness and creates a crisis in moral life.' It is the embodiment of the redemptive working of the raksaka in the moral will of humanity with a view to recover it from its sinfulness. The theory of the ten avatārs is often misunderstood by its friendly as well as hostile critics as is evident in the following nine accounts: (1) The asuric type of men condemns the avatāra as the incarnation of Visnu or deceptive māyin that allies himself with the daivic order in crushing the asura order in a covert way. (2) The popular view that incarnation is a supernatural descent of Isvara causing a vacancy in Vaikunta misses the truth of divine omnipresence and errs by giving a spatial interpretation to a spiritual truth. (3) The method of historic criticism finds in the avatāra cult a crude combination of history and mythology, which is said to characterise the epics and the buranas and illustrates it by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Yatīndramata Dīpika, IX. 132.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānirbhavati bhārata! abhyutthanamadharmasya tadātmānam srjāmyaham—B.G., IV. 7.

tracing the modern idea of Kṛṣṇa to the fusion of three different earlier Krsnas. The Krsna of the Upanisads is said to be identified with Vasudeva of the Satvata sect and later on with the idea of Nārāyaṇa in the Pāñcarātra. (4) The evolutionary view describes the nine avatārs as successive stages in the evolution of species. The fish, the tortoise and the boar mark the animal level; the man-lion, the dwarf and the militant Rāma, a higher stage in the ascent, and Rāma and Kṛṣṇa would, according to this view, represent the triumph of the whole process. Dust and deity mark the two poles of the plan of life, and even the worm can mount up to the level of Vāsudeva. (5) S'aivism is inclined to accept the biological exposition of incarnation and point out the imperfections inherent in the repeated birth and death of the embodied avatār, though it is the evolutional highest. (6) Natural religion is opposed to the supernatural account of incarnation, and gives a moral version, when it explains the incarnational process as stages in perfection. Any one can by yoga awaken the dormant Kundalini sakti, that is coiled up in the Mūlādhāra, and become a divine being or yōgīsvara. Īsvara is purusōttama or uttama purusa, and every man can become a pattern of perfection and heroic exemplar of humanity. (7) Supernaturalism protests against this psychological view, and insists on suprarational truths being explained in a scriptural way. It is like the Christian faith that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, who has entered into the history of humanity as the embodiment of infinite redemptive mercy with a view to annex it to God. God descends into man so that man may ascend to Him. Whom the Lord elects, unto him He reveals Himself and the Lord chose Israel as a race fit for His redemptive revelation. The theory of descent and ascent is an anthropomorphic idea, which has no philosophic value, and the

incarnational event as a unique phenomenon presupposes the arbitrary nature of the divine will, and susbstitutes magic for mercy. An appeal to the miraculous to frighten man to accept God takes away from the dignity of moral autonomy. (8) The allegorical view therefore explains away the avatāra as the symbolic expression of the ātman entering into the inner nature and witnessing the fight between good and evil. The Katha Ubanisad portrays the character of the ātman as the charioteer within, with reason as the driver, the senses as the horses and the sense objects as the highway. The vision of the visvarūba or universal form is a poetic metaphor of the working of the spirit in man, but is historically worthless-Some theosophic interpreters of the Gītā say that while Para-Brahman does not incarnate, the logos descends to the plane of the jīva and works for world welfare. (9) The monist thinks that the Upanisadic absolute degenerates into the theistic avatār of the Gītā, which is less real, though it may be more useful. The moment we think of nirguna Brahman, negation enters into its pure being and changes it into purusottama. The concept of the brooding Nārāyana is a symbol of the absolute 'I' confronted by the pseudo 'I' or non-ego. The 'I' posits itself and opposites itself, and the universe betrays the self-contradiction of being-becoming from the post to purusottama, though the latter is the highest conceptual reading of the absolute. An avatāra is, in this view, an extraordinary manifestation of human goodness and glory and not a supernatural descent of Isvara. The avatāra has birth and body composed of elements, though they are illusory appearances of Brahman.

The Gītā is the exposition of the avatāra by S'rī Kṛṣṇa, the perfect incarnation, and is an Upaniṣad that enshrines the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 539.

essentials of all the Upanisads. Every critic of the incarnational theme is constrained to accept its elevating morals, though he may explain it in his own way or even explain it away. But the value of the avatāra is that it is not a view of the map-making intellect that stains the incarnational Light, but the intuitive vision or the soul sight of the Redeemer as its self. Such soul-sight destroys age-long avidyā-karma and the Gītā guarantees God to every one, demoniac or divine, and offers universal salvation. An uncompromising infidel like S'isupāla, who is consumed by the hatred of the incarnation, is worthy of grace as well as a condescending rationalist to whom a theistic incarnation is a concession to the ignorant. The allegorical view is often a reaction of religion as a philosophy to the attack of the rationalist and the sceptic, and is colourless and timid. The Indologist as a historian who traces the evolution of God and dissects Krsna. into three aspects, applies the categories of time and space to what is supersensuous. The theory of one unique incarnation and a chosen people has the fascination of fanaticism, but implies divine favouritism. The monist who explains avatāra as the incarnation of the maya-ridden Isvara and finally reduces Him to the status of the avidyā-ridden jīva follows the God-destroying logic of subjectivism, and does not respond to the logic of the heart. If monistic logic is vigorously followed, it should abandon the compromising attitude which says that the Gītā is the adaptation of Upanisadic absolutism to the needs of theism, and reject theism altogether. The theory of the avatāra is a spiritual truth which is entirely opposed to the geographical idea of descent, the evolutionary idea of the progress of purusa into purusottama or the supernaturalistic view of a miraculous advent suspending the laws of nature. The Visistādvaitic theory is faithful to the Gītā

when it expounds the avatāra as the invasion of the redemptive grace of the Raksaka into history in moments of moral crisis with a view to arrest the progress of social disruption, redeem the sinner from his sinfulness, and commune with the devotee who thirsts for His living presence.' The redemptive grace of vibhava is realised in the recovery of the Veda from its destroyers, the extraction of immortality from the waters of life, the maintenance of the cosmic order and the law of righteousness and the living assurance of salvation to all beings.<sup>2</sup> Besides these historic incarnations there are permanent incarnations known as arca or the concretion of kṛpā consecrated by bhakti and mantra. Arca worshipped in temples is the reservoir of the redemptive mercy of *Isvara* who enters into a formless form of His own without being affected by the changes of prakrti and purusa. Arca is a Vaisnavite idea which is often misinterpreted as image worship or idolatry. The materialist who condemns it as a relic of fetichism and sees the stone or the wood and not the living and speaking God is like the scientist, who tries to understand the tears of love by the anatomical dissection of the lachrymal glands. To the idealist image worship is the projection of the idea of God into forms of matter or a symbolic representation of spiritual truths. The pantheist who sees God in everything sees Him in the image as well. The monotheist hates the anthropomorphic view that humanises the transcendental Holy and the paganism of the idolater that moulds God into a graven image, as an anti-God cult and a heresy. The non-dualist accepts the logic that the infinite cannot be spatialised and localised, but draws a different

 $<sup>^1</sup>$ paritrāņāya sādhūnām vinas'āya ca duşkṛtām l<br/> dharmasamsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge ll. —B. G., IV. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Yatindramata Dīpikā, IX. 131.

conclusion by recognising the psychological needs of the devotee and conceding the distinction between two Brahmans. Lord may, when He pleases, assume a bodily shape formed of māyā in order to gratify thereby His devout worshippers. The contemplation of God in the form of the sacred sāligram is not therefore contrary to reason. Logic should subserve the demands of psychology and become psychological. Anthropomorphism in some form is inescapable, though, finally, saguna Brahman is only an illusory appearance of the absolute. The Visistadvaitin does not accept the theory of two standpoints with its double view of philosophy and religion nor the monotheism (like Bhāskara's) that attributes qualities to divine personality and denies His divine form. If the theory of two standpoints is true and the real needs of the mumuksu are conceded, it logically follows that Brahman is niravayava and nirguna in the spiritual sense, that it is beyond prakrti and its constituent qualities of satva, raias and tamas and saguna in the religious sense that He is the redeeming self. The Infinite finitises itself by having an abrākrta sarīra or eternal formless form of its own for the sake of the finite self that seeks it, and this divine form is the concrete embodiment of the will to save humanity. It is made of love and not of matter or karma, and it is not a concession to the mass mind steeped in avidyā. As the Infinite is the boundless Lord of tenderness and compassion, such self-limitation enriches the divine nature instead of conditioning it or diminishing its content. The Person with sunlike splendour individualises the form as special providence in order to gratify His devotees and is the image and not in the image.2 The divine form is called subhāsrava as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Sankara Bhāşya, I. i. 20, p. 80 of Thibaut's translation. (S. B. E. XXXIV.)

it purifies and is accessible to them. The object is to render the divine form perceptually obvious and accessible to all as arca, and this self-manifestation is a miracle of mercy. The five forms of Brahman as para, vyūha, vibhava, antaryāmin and area are equally real in the philosophical sense, though from the point of view of religious value each succeeding selfmanifestation may be more valuable to the mumuksu. Visistādvaitin equates the Brahman and the antarvāmin of the Ubanisads with Vasudeva of the Pañcaratra, the Bhagavan of the Purānas, the avatārs of the Itihāsas and the arca of the Ālvārs, and is opposed to the theories of sublation and subordination. To a monist like Deussen, with his view of non-contradiction and degrees of reality, the absolute of Yajñavalkya lapses into the pantheistic unity of the antaryamin and pan-cosmic atman, then into the God of theism and finally deteriorates into the God of deism. The theist counters this argument by employing the tu quoque method and says that the history of Indian philosophy witnesses the gradual triumph of theism over monism and pantheism. One school of Vaisnavism with its faith in advaya-jñānatatva and Bhedābheda distinguishes between Brahman, Paramatman and Bhagavan by relying on the Bhāgavata text (I. ii. 12) and the definition of Bhagavān and Vāsudeva in the Vișnu Purāna (vi. 5). Bhagavān is the supreme sat or advaya-tatva who is svayam-siddha or self existent and the source of other existences, and who cannot be logically defined by means of genus and differentia. The letter bha implies the source and substance of the universe; by ga is meant the inner ruler; the dissylable bhaga connotes the six qualities of dominion, might, glory, splendour, wisdom and dispassion; and the letter  $v\bar{a}$  refers to the self which exists in all beings and in which all beings exist and this mahāvākva or great text of Bhagavān is applied in a specific sense to Vāsudeva who abides in all beings as their self. Though immanent in all beings as their inner self, He is eternally perfect and the Supreme of the supreme, and is the summum genus and summum bonum. The Brahman of pure monism is, like the invisible ray of the sun, the eternal light radiating from the spiritual body of Bhagavān. Paramātman is finite-infinite and a partial expression of Bhagavān. Though Brahman and Paramatman are less than Bhagavan the absolute, they are in a bhedābheda relation with Him, and are different from the jīva. Vallabha in his S'uddhādvaita extols Krsna as Parabrahman or sacchidananda rūba that is at once the Brahman of the Upanisad, the Paramatman of the Smrti and the Bhagavan of the Bhagavata. Owing to the sakti of āvirbhāva or evolution Parabrahman emanates into the many like sparks from fire and from the sat form emerges jagat. from the cit form jivas flow out and the antaryamins arise from ānanda. But according to Rāmānuja, Brahman, Bhagavān, Paramātman and arca connote the one absolute as the perfect Self whose sole aim is to perfect the finite self and make it immortal. His self-manifestations are therefore not due to self-contradiction, bhedābheda limitation or emanation.

The infinite perfections of *Isvara* are dominated by the redemptive motive of  $day\bar{a}$ , and this view is a reorientation of the metaphysical qualities of satyam,  $j\bar{n}\bar{a}nam$  and anantam, the ethical idea of amalatva or purity and the cosmoligical ideas of omnipotence and omniscience. They are restated in the light of the redemptive motive of God as the attribute of  $day\bar{a}$ . Brahman transcends the form and matter of prakrti, and is niravayava or formless and nirguna or attributeless, but He embodies Himself as  $day\bar{a}$  to redeem the  $j\bar{v}va$ . There is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Vedānta Des'ika, Dayā Sataka.

no God like unto the God of dayā, and His mercy endures for ever and rains on all. His infinite perfections become valueless without dayā. The Lord not only blesses the pure in heart, that follow the way of righteousness and keep the Vedic commandments, but saves the sinner that transgresses the law and has done evil in His sight. He is the rock of love and the sole refuge of those who are immersed in desolation and distress. The Lord as judge saves the righteous but, as the deliverer with His infinite loving kindness, He seeks the iniquitous and forgives their transgression. His juridical severity is outdone by the tenderness of His forgivingness and He makes haste to redeem the wicked from their wicked course and gives succour to the lowly and the meek. Davā inspires confidence in God as the God of salvation, and it soothes the broken heart and the contrite spirit. The Vaisnavite experience of mercy is more marvellous and varied than the Semitic variety, and its unique feature lies in its universality. Deliverance works in multitudinous ways and enriches the nature of the Deliverer and entitles Him to be called by the following names: He is sarva bhūta suhrt or the friend of all beings, parama audāra or all-bountiful and gāmbhīra whose quality of mercy cannot be quantitatively measured. ·He is sulabha or easily accessible to all jīvas, āsrta-paratantra, who depends on His devotees, and samya or approachable by all irrespective of their birth and worth. Sausilya is the intimacy that grows between the infinitely great or Isvara and the infinitesimally small or jīva. Vātsalva is the tenderness and affection that overpowers, as it were, divine omniscience and makes it forget the sinfulness of the sinner. The Lord of love may relish physical but not moral evil. Mārdava is the softness of love that cannot bear the pangs of separation from its lost self and includes sweet reasonableness. Sthairya is the will to save the postulant in spite of his sinfulness. Kāruṇya is the sympathetic love of the Redeemer to seek and heal the afflicted jīva and give it succour and stability. Mādhurya is the inner sweetness that ever resides in the Saviour, who conquers evil by His seductive beauty and love and imparts His bliss to the jīva. Audārya is the divine quality of treating the bestowal of boons a privilege granted to the Giver of all good by His beloved and He is never satisfied with what He gives to him. Ārjava is the full, frank and free expression of the redemptive quality without reservation. Sauhārda is the heartfelt desire to help all beings and redeem them from their sinfulness. The multitude of mercies has, however, one ruling motive, which lies in transforming the nature of Īsvara as righteous judge into the deliverer or universal saviour.

The Visiṣṭādvaitic philosophy of the sat without a second transforms itself into the Vaiṣṇavite pantheism that extols Vāsudeva as the All-Self and the S'rī Vaiṣṇavite theism that equates Godhead with the dual self of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa or S'riyaḥ-Pati. This transition is not due to the grafting of a new theory on the old or a historic growth due to the adaptation of Upaniṣadic monism to the anthropomorphic requirements of the mass mind, but is the self-expression of the inner redemptive necessity that follows from the divine nature of dayā. Brahman, who is beyond prakṛti and purusa, expresses its will to redemption by having a twofold spiritual form of its own as Lord and S'rī that are philosophically insepārable though functionally distinguishable. The cosmic ruler is

the second second

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Vide Rāmānuja's Saranāgati Gadya.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Hrīs'ca te lakṣmis'ça patnyau.—Puruṣa Sūkta.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Īs'varīm sarvabhūtānām.—S'rī Sūkta.

ruled by love, and S'rī resides in the ever blooming lotus of love and is the very heart of the divine nature. Isvara rules the world by His relentless law of karma and His holy wrath against the evil-doer is inescapable, but the rigour of karma is overpowered by the redemptive love of krbā. Evil is destroyed and the evil-doer saved. The Lord rules by law and S'rī rules by love and the love of law and the law of love are so vitally intertwined in the divine nature as to render nugatory any attempt at the philosophic analysis of their exact nature. The majesty of the holy law of justice is eternally wedded to the all-conquering might of mercy. While ethics insists on the reign of karma, and religion on the absoluteness of krpā, ethical religion reconciles the claims and counter-claims of karma and krbā by regarding the law of righteousness as the root of moral and spiritual endeavour and deliverance by davā as its fruition. Goodness is changed into godliness by the inner mediating link of dayā. Karma is a criticism of caprice and is rooted in justice, but in its relentlessness, it affords no hope of deliverance and might lead to despair. Kṛpā is a criticism of karma, and is rooted in forgiving kindness, but in its inner flow it may afford no scope for moral responsibility and contrition. But the dual principle of karma and krpā overcomes their dualism by their harmonious interplay. Law is then pervaded by love and love is pervaded by law and in this interdependence lie the stability of the moral order and the guarantee of universal salvation. But Rāmānuja's Visis--tādvaita, as S'rī Vaisnava theology, is deeply interested in the exact determination of the relation between the Lord and S'rī and has given rise to two divergent schools of interpretation formulated respectively by Vedānta Desika and Pillai Lōkācārya. The former defines S'riyah-Pati as Lord and S'rī

as a dual self which is one in two and two in one and their co-operative identity is indispensable to the seeker after mukti. Redemptive mercy is coeval with exacting righteousness and in the eternal marital fusion of Divine law and Divine love lies the assurance that  $krb\bar{a}$  is the crown and consummation of a contrite heart. If Isvara is omnipotent and mercy has only monadic power, the triumph of krbā over karma will be only contingent. Therefore S'rī is infinite and not finite1; and the concept of S'riyah-Pati recognises the foundational truth of ethical religion, that the holiness of law is ever wedded to the forgiveness of love. Each acts and reacts on the other, and in their interaction lie the stability of the social and moral order and the salvability of the sinner. Pillai Lökācārya combats this view by the counter-argument that there cannot be two infinites which are all-pervasive. The monotheistic truth that there is no God but God is negatived by the idea of a dual divine personality and frustrated by it. Laksmi is, therefore, according to Pillai Lökācārya, finite like the jīva, but is ever free unlike the bound self and she may be regarded as finite-infinite and as a living link of love between *Isvara* and the *jīva*. She is the divine mediatrix that intervenes between human culpability and the holy wrath of the Lord, softens the severity of divine justice, and changes the responsibility of the sinner into the mood of responsiveness to mercy. Dayā conquers Isvara by its innate sweetness and beauty, and converts the sinner by love and thus mediates between the saviour and the sinner. While one school stresses the logic of monotheism, the other recognises the equal validity and value of the logic of the heart and the

<sup>1</sup> Vedānta Des'ika's commentary on Yāmuna's Catus's'lōki.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Pilļai Lökācārya's Srī Vacana Bhūṣaṇā: cetananai aruļāle tiruttum isvaranai aļagāļe tiruttum.

heart of logic and refuses to subordinate the ethical claims of theism to the religious demands of redemption. To the S'rī Vaiṣṇavite as a Visiṣṭādvaitin it is a sufficient assurance that Īsvara is not merely a judge but is also a deliverer and the essential nature of Brahman is to brahmanise the jīva and, from the pragmatic point of view, there is not much difference between the disputants as followers of S'rī Vaiṣṇavism.

That the formulation of a philosophical problem is more easy than its solution is borne out by the question of the origin and meaning of evil. It will conduce to clear thinking, if it is viewed from the standpoints of physical, moral and metaphysical evil. Physical evil is suffering due to hunger, poverty, disease, misery inflicted on us by nature as in earthquakes and volcanic irruptions, and pain caused by supernatural agencies, and is classified as adhyātmika, ādhibhautika, and adhi-daivika, centrally, peripherally or supernaturally originated. Physical evil is contrasted with moral evil, and suffering is not always the consequence of wickedness. Selfless workers devoted to world-welfare often court suffering. Besides, pain is not always a punishment for transgressing the moral order. Matter is not essentially evil. Embodiment is invariably conjoined with misery, but there is no causal or necessary relation between the two. Embodiment is an evil only when it is the result of the false identification of the atman with the body on account of avidyā-kārma and not when it is voluntarily sought by the Lord and the mukta. The theory that Isvara has created the world to provide for human wants and that He bestows His aisvarya or wealth on virtuous men, assigns a commercial value to karma and destroys its intrinsic worth. It is not consoling to be told that evil is a blessing in disguise, and that pain is beneficial especially when it is unmerited suffering. Moral evil is the violation of the laws of conduct based on rational determination, and is rooted in sensuality and the self-will of ahankāra. Ahankāra is the asuric propensity in man that impels him to gratify the lusts of the flesh and indulge in voluptuousness, pugnacity and self-aggrandisement, and is therefore the matrix of all moral evil. Virtue is impelled by the sātvika quality, and induces the moral agent to choose a course of conduct that avoids egoism and promotes the ends of social welfare. While a good act is better than a good motive or intention, a wicked motive is worse than a wicked act, especially when it deepens into villainy, and taints the inner moral nature and subtly infects society itself. The āsuric or satanic man makes evil his good, and is moved by motiveless malignity and cruelty for their own sake. Moral evil is intensified into sin, when it is a deliberate transgression of a moral law regarded as a divine command, and is a revolt against the law of God. The world of samsara is the battle-ground between dharma and adharma, which seems to justify the Manichean theory of the fight between good and evil. The eternal warfare between the God of good and light and the force of evil and darkness referred to in Zoroastrianism involves a dualism opposed to the theistic idea of the Raksaka. Even the view of Christian theology that Satan fights against God and that man suffers from original sin is not helpful in solving the problem of evil. Good and bad are mutually exclusive, and this logical truth of exclusiveness is applied to the realm of ethical religion, and becomes the raison de etre of the division of persons into the good and the wicked, based on the principle of exclusion or antagonism. While the sātvika or good man who keeps the commandments of God merits the loving kindness of God and attains salvation, the sinner who offends

God is condemned as a heretic and hurled into eternal hellfire. Ethical religion, in a more pronounced form, affirms the theory of pre-destination, when it holds that the Lord Himself elects some to pursue the good and follow the path of mukti and others to follow the downward path of malignity and sin, and hurls them into demoniac wombs and hellish torture. From the metaphysical point of view evil is, but ought not to be. God is good, and therefore the existence of evil and other imperfections has to be traced to the freedom of the finite self. Moral freedom is a real choice between different possible courses of action, and the jīva is responsible for the choice of evil, and Isvara is responsible not for the choice between good and evil, but for the pleasures and pains that follow the deed. The existence of evil in the divine plan is only a bare possibility, but it is the self that makes the possible actual and enjoys the fruits of its karma. Pleasure and pain are determined by the nature of karma, and they vary with different persons at different times. Nothing, cit or acit, is intrinsically good or bad (apuruṣārtha), pleasant or painful and the hedonistic value of a thing is relative to the moral differences caused by karma. Thus it is the finite self that is accountable for the existence of evil and the experience of pain and not the Supreme Self which is its inner ruler and which is ever pure and perfect. But the ultimate problem of evil is not solved by analysing it into the physical, moral and metaphysical aspects and making the finite self accountable for its existence. To say that Iswara permits the possibility of evil, which He could have prevented, does not free Him from His responsibility, and this difficulty results in the dualism between human and divine will and their collision. The existence of evil as an instrument of goodness having an educative value is still a menace to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., III. ii. 12 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 609.

theism as an ethical religion. The Christian doctrine of original sin as an inner depravity of the soul and a propensity inherited from the fall of the first man is contrary to the innate dignity of man as the son of God and to the redemptive mercy of God. If evil is real, it denies the omnipotence of the Lord and makes Him finite and helpless. The Advaitin holds that the moral distinction between good and evil is selfcontradictory, illusory and stultified by iñāna. If evil is real, it cannot be destroyed; if it is unreal and non-existent, there is no moral problem at all. Karma deals with the 'ought' and jñāna with what exists for ever, and the former is due to avidyā, which is sublated by vidyā which eventually sublates itself. The Bhedābhedavādin refutes this theory of illusion as an illusory theory, which makes moral striving a semblance and mumuksutva a mockery. Karma is as much a fact of experience as avidya, and the two are subdued by moral and spiritual discipline and not sublated by mere jñāna. But the Bhedābheda theory of upādhis, makes the absolute the abode of evil and other imperfections. When the absolute finitises itself, good and evil, pleasure and pain follow necessarily from the divine nature, and Brahman is both saint and sinner, and being infinite, He has to suffer from evil and sin in infinite ways. Western absolutists like Bradley regard error and evil as only an appearance of reality, which is finally transmuted into harmony by the reblending of material. "Every flame of passion, chaste or carnal, would still burn in the absolute like a note absorbed in a higher harmony." Heaven's design can realise itself as effectively in a Borgia as in a Buddha, and the absolute is richer for every discord. To Bosanquet, good is made of the same stuff as evil, and evil is good in the wrong place. Suffering is due to finiteness and externality, but, when the

and dveṣa, and acquire self-sovereignty. He has the freedom to grow into the goodness of God or lapse into wickedness and be the slave of sensibility. Freedom of the self presupposes the possibility of self-realisation or the knowledge of the ātman as different from the bodily self of prakṛti. When the moral self thus realises his spiritual nature, the theory of karma acquires a religious motive based on the redemptive nature of kṛpā and work is transfigured into the worship of God. Freedom is the gift of God in order that it may be turned into the gift of the self to God, who is its inner self. Karma is then consecrated into kainkarya, and the conflict of two wills ceases when the finite self attunes itself to the infinite.

The problem of the relation between karma and krpā involves a dualism between the principles of righteousness and redemption and constitutes the paradox of S'rī Vaisnavism as an ethical religion. In every philosophic system as an intellectual speculation, there is an ultimate gap or surd which baffles the logical intellect and leads it to ultimate doubts and agnosticism or to a sense of holy mystery. The crux of Advaita is the dualism between Brahman and māyā and it is, like the riddle of the rope-snake, the riddle of reality itself. It may be a self-contradiction or a misunderstanding or an indefinable something. But it leaves us broken and barren by its God-devouring dialectics and the denial of the working of grace. The philosophy of S'rī Vaisnavism as an ethical religion is likewise faced with the baffling question of the relation between karma and kṛpā, but in all humility it accepts it as a holy mystery which cannot be solved by logic, but can only be dissolved by direct divine experience. The mumukșu cannot rely on the inner light of reason without the grace of God and the guru.

Ethical religion has however to avoid the extremes of rationalistic ethics based on the law of karma, and the religion of redemption deduced from the idea of krpā. The former is the ethical philosophy of karma or karma vāda as the inviolable law of recompense and retribution, which, as in Buddhism, has for its background the postulation of dharma as an eternal natural and moral order. It repudiates the reality of the finite self and of the absolute self and affirms that things are a flowing flux, and that the self is a fleeting process. It accepts Sānkhyan rationalism by denying the value of a theodicy founded on a faith in a theos or cosmic ruler, and goes further than Sānkhyan thought by substituting for the theory of burusa a cosmodicy deduced from the moral faith in the impersonal law of kamma and dhamma. The cosmos is akartr, without a designer or first cause and final cause. The deed continues without a doer as the wheel of becoming by way of cause. The theistic idea that Providence crowns virtue with happiness and that retribution is the penalty for vice is supplanted by the cosmodicy or way of dhamma which is as exact as the orbits of the planets round the sun. Pleasure and pain alone constitute the moral sanction for virtue and vice. The law of cyclic recompense is so austere that not even a god can escape its rigour. The law of righteousness or sīla is contained in the noble eightfold path, and its aim is to face the grim fact of universal suffering or dukka and end it by righteous living and benevolence. Buddhism is a revolt against the ills of life, and does not favour the attitude of resignation to the inevitable, as it insists on stilling the will to live and the cessation of the process of becoming. But the moral faith in the law of cyclic recompense in which the effect can be exhausted only by expiation offers no hope of deliverance from

the ills of life on account of its mathematical rigour and relentlessness. Reflection on the ills of life and their universality promotes a mood of pessimism and sickmindedness which condemns the world as the worst of all possible worlds. Civilisation is the flowering of life and its fading away. Life itself, with its unsatisfied desires, is a mockery and an illusion. The theory of recompense does not furnish any incentive for the exercise of sympathy. Buddha's insistence on buddhi as the only way of attaining enlightenment was answered by the Buddhist enthroning Buddha in the place of buddhi, as the saviour of life. The ethics of karma and dharma is rooted in the religion of redemptive  $krp\bar{a}$ , and the moral feeling of the law of retribution is a failing which gives way to the religious faith in the Bödhisatva or the Lord of Redemption. The world is not the domain of kārmic necessity, but is the living expression of the incarnation of mercy.

The Christian religion of redemption is a criticism of the Buddhistic law of dharma. Christianity is the gospel of the forgiveness of sin. The propensity to evil is, according to Christianity, an innate depravity, and deepens into sin, when it is a transgression of a divine law. Sin is the sense of guilt arising not from ignorance or error but from the collision of the human will with the divine, is blameworthy, and entails punishment. It is the doer that is punished and not the deed. The hideousness of sin is a measure of the forgiveness of God. Forgiveness is not the cancellation of debt but the assurance of mercy and the free gift of God. It is the offer of pardon to the sinner sunk in sin and soiled by it and not to the self-righteous man who conforms to the codes of statutory religion with meticulous accuracy and rigour. It is only the legalistic view of morals

that regards mercy as the reward of merit. To merit mercy is self-contradictory, and it breeds the bargaining temper. Justification is the work of God, and is not won by human merit: and the good man is not the pietist that seeks pardon and has the consciousness of desert, but the sinner that is sought by the pardoning and suffering God. Incarnation is the invasion of divine mercy in a supernatural way into the history of humanity with a view to redeeming it from its sinful course. Israel was chosen by the Father in Heaven who sent His only begotten Son as the seed of Abraham to atone for the sins of humanity and thus annex it to God. The sinner is made righteous by the infusion of grace into his inner nature, and the burden of sin is removed for ever. Forgiveness and penitence go together, and the fact that sin is forgiven presupposes the faith that it is forgivable. Penitence implies the sense of unworthiness and utter humility and the absence of self-complacence and conceit; it is analysed into three factors, namely, the knowledge of the sinfulness of sin, the feeling of sorrow that results from the thought of sin, and the will to abandon the way of sin by seeking the mercy of God, the Redeemer. The Son of God, who is the Son of Man, is a living link of love between sinning humanity and the holiness of the Father in Heaven, and history is the process of the pardoning God incarnate in human society with a view to annexing it to God by atoning for its sins. The problem of the relation between merit and grace will be fully dealt with in the chapter on prapatti.

Christianity recognises the need for forgiveness, but its justification by faith or works does not satisfy the demands of ethical religion and solve the dualism between the ethical idea of righteousness and the religious faith of redemption.

Buddhism rightly stresses the moral law of karma and dharma; but, in its distrust of the moral self and the denial of the saving grace of God, it has starved religious consciousness and exposed it to relentless Vedāntic criticism. The Buddhistic theory of the non-existence of the soul is refuted by the Vedanta Sūtras as nihilistic and incapable of proof, and its futility is brought out in the history of philosophy, both in the west and in the east. Just as the realism of Locke led to the subjectivism of Berkeley and the nihilism of Hume and the reconstruction of philosophy by Kant in his Critique of Practical reason, the realism of the Sautrantikas and the Vaibhāṣikas: led to the subjectivism of the Yōgācāra, the nihilism of the Mādhyamika, and finally to the re-enthronement of Upanisadic wisdom by Bādarāyana, which enshrines the truth of the selfrevelation of Brahman in the immortal words "Whom the self chooses, unto him It reveals Itself." The Christian doctrine of original sin and vicarious atonement does not elucidate the nature of moral freedom, the immortality of the self and the nature of God. The problem of unmerited suffering and ethical responsibility is more fully explained by the theory of karma and the eternity of the self than by the theory of one birth and creation out of nothing and immortality of the self. The Vedāntic truth of the immanence of Brahman in all beings without abandoning His holiness is more valuable to a religion of redemption than the idea of God as the Heavenly Father. Lastly, the doctrine of a chosen people and a single incarnation does not satisfy the spiritual needs of the jīvas for a universal redeemer. The "Song on the Chariot" is therefore more satisfactory ethically than the "Teaching under the Bo Tree" and spiritually more satisfying than the "Sermon on the Mount"; and it is

yam evaişa vrnute tena labhyah.—Ka. Up., I. ii. 22.

the Gītā that is the ethical completion of Buddhism and the spiritual fulfilment of Christianity. Its ethical religion alone solves the dualism between retribution and redemptive mercy. Christianity is undoubtedly the religion of a pardoning God, but its Semitic doctrine of the Judgment Day with its theory of wheat and chaff, when the faithful are summoned to the throne of God and the heathen is hurled into eternal hell, is entirely foreign to the S'rī Vaisnavite theory which starts with the idea of God as judge and ends with the incarnational assurance of salvation of all jīvas including the sub-human species, contained in the Carama S'lōka of the Gītā.¹

The oft-repeated criticism that Hinduism is not historic betrays a misunderstanding of the true import of religion. If religion deals with supra-sensuous and supra-rational reality and history with the temporal succession of events, a historic religion is a contradiction in terms. But if history is studied scientifically by turning sequence into consequence and philosophically by discerning the ultimate meaning of human progress, the conflict between history and religion is narrowed down. The moral and spiritual progress of the purusa should be contrasted with the concept of the process of the nature of prakrti and the purpose of God as paramapurușa. The world of prakrti is an ever-changing parināmic process and serves as a common theatre for the moulding of muktas. Matter is not false or evil, but the materialistic view of the atman is false and evil. Moral progress presupposes the freedom of the purusa to gain self-sovereignty or be the slave of sensibility. Moral progress is a means to

¹ sarva dharmān parityajya māmekam s'araņam vraja l aham tvā sarvapāpebhyō mōkṣayiṣyāmi mā s'ucaḥ ll—B.G., XVIII. 66.

self-realisation. But even the realisation of the ātman should point beyond itself to escape the perils of the ego-centric predicament, and it should find its completion in the religious knowledge of the paramapurusa as the home of all eternal values. The redemptive sankalpa of God is immanent in the human self with a view to freeing it from the fetters of karma and making it pure and perfect. The temporal process has a meaning only in the supra-temporal, and redemption is not a far-off divine event, as the idea of grace fulfils itself through karma. The purpose of Brahman is to brahmanise the jīva. The process of prakṛti and the progress of the self have their meaning in the saving sankalpa of the Redeemer. Divine dayā enters into the history of humanity with a view to moulding matter for the making of muktas and the inner meaning of human history is the brahmanisation of all jīvas.

## CHAPTER VII

## ONTOLOGY IV: BRAHMAN AS S'ESI

THE idea of Brahman as s'eși completes the triadic thought of Visistādvaita and is essential to its practical side known as prapatti. The metaphysics of Visistādvaita deals with the definition of Brahman as the absolute sat as the ādhāra or all-Self, that pervades all beings as their immanent ground, and imparts its substantiality to them as their inner sustaining life. The value of this concept of ādhāra consists in the ontological knowledge that Brahman is the Being of our being and the real Reality that is the meaning of finite existence both as its cause and as its effect (upādāna and upādeya). The self has its own separate being, but its ultimate meaning is Brahman, and it is therefore indistinguishable from it. The two can be metaphysically analysed but cannot be physically divided owing to their aprthaksiddha or inseparable relation. The ethical concept of Brahman as nivantā or Ruler corrects the pantheistic tendency to equate Brahman with the world by its definition of Brahman as nimitta kārana or instrumental cause and its insistence on the quality of moral eminence and holiness. While cit and acit have their being in Brahman, Brahman is not in them, as it exceeds their content, and is absolutely perfect. The value of this concept of nivantriva consists in the ethical realisation that the self has the freedom to gain sovereignty over its animal or prākrta nature and attune its will to that of the infinite. The self thus derives its modal being and form from Brahman and depends on His will for its functioning. While ādheyatva brings out the former truth of svarūbāsritatva or modal dependence, nivāmvatva or the state of being ruled explains the latter idea of sankalpādhīna or dependence on the divine will. The idea of Brahman as s'esi is a further determination of the divine nature and it is the consummation of the moral consciousness. Brahman is not only the ground of our being and the inner ruler, but is the goal of all our endeavour. He is the endeavour (upāya) as well as the end of life (upeva); a task and a fact; and all thinking beings and objects of thought exist not in their own right but as means to His satisfaction. Acit or cit is not a being-in-itself, but a being-for-another. Matter exists as a medium for self-realisation, and self-realisation is not for selfsatisfaction, but for the satisfaction of the inner Self. On the religious view, paramapurusa the Supreme Self wills the true and the good, and the conation is immediately self-realised, but moral life implies an aspiration not yet changed into fruition, and it is the paradox of ethical religion that moral and spiritual life is a pursuit as well as a possession. It is solved by the spiritual faith that religion is the truth of moral life; and that the inner Redeemer is Himself the way and the goal. Just as the moral law is the truth of the natural law, ethical religion is the philosophy of fruition in action. The finite self has its being in Brahman, belongs to it and exists for its satisfaction, and Brahman enters into the jīva as its self to brahmanise it. The joy of such fruition is not a hedonistic pleasure of self-elation but is a divine quality. In the divine nature, activity and attainment go together.

While everything in the universe, acit as well as cit. has its being in Brahman and depends on its will for its form and function, cit alone is conscious of this sustenance and dependence. The self-consciousness of the jīva implies reason and freedom of the will by which the ātman eliminates everything that belongs to the world of brakrti from the motive of conduct, and realises its spiritual nature. If the atman falsely identifies itself with brakrti and its gunas, it becomes the sensitive self or the product of nature, is phenomenalised and subjects itself to the external determinations of sense inclinations, and becomes the slave of desire. But if it exercises its moral freedom, it realises its noumenal nature as a spiritual being and attains self-mastery and autonomy. Every cetana, as a rational being, has the self-legislative will to free itself from the fetters of sensuous, spurious individuality and elevate itself to the autonomy of the pure atman. The true meaning of spiritual freedom thus won by moral effort consists in the knowledge that the real author of all our actions is the inner Ruler of all beings and in the dedication of every act of ours as the adoration of the highest Self or paramapurusa. The transition from the spiritual consciousness of ātman to the religious consciousness of paramātman or sarva sesi is a revolution in life from the ego-centric outlook to the theo-centric. The motive of conduct is shifted from the self to its inner self and every karma is consecrated as kainkarya. The self gains its freedom to dedicate it to the inner atman who is eternally free and self-dependent. In this way the s'eşa-s'eşi relation between the finite and the infinite is transformed and deepened into the relation between dasa and svamin or servant and master. While cit serves the supreme will of the sesi, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rahasyatrayasāra, Chap. III.

cetana or spiritual self has the conception of this end and offers his freedom as a self-gift to God as the real Self or author of all activity. While the ahankāra-ridden jīva regards itself as the centre of the universe, and suffers from self-conceit and moral destruction, the spiritual self attunes itself to the will of the infinite as the sarva sesi and svāmin. There is no God but God; He alone is omnipotent and His will is eternally self-realised. Every creature depends on His redemptive will for its being and function. But the self has the creatureconsciousness that it is made in the image of God, and owes its nature and value to Him as the svāmin. Dāsyatva or the idea of being a servant of God is thus the jīva's consciousness of the eternal self-dependence of Isvara and the dependence of the jīva on Īsvara and its free submission to His redemptive purpose. The supreme end of life is attained not in the natural world of prakrti or the spiritual world of ātman, but in the religious sphere of paramatman. The idea of the s'eşi gives the highest meaning to moral and spiritual experience as He is the means as well as the end of conduct. This is the true meaning of conduct as kainkarya, and the highest freedom of life lies in the selfless service to the Supreme who is the only Self without a second. We cannot live except when we die to live. When ahankāra is destroyed and the aham or 'I' is offered to its inner Ruler as svāmin, selfhood has its true meaning and culmination in consecrated service to the Lord and in self-oblation to Him, freed from the taint of self-conceit and self-righteousness.

The principle of selfhood is central to religious experience, and to know the self is to know the seși who is in us and with us as the Self of our self and is the fruition of our moral and spiritual consciousness. The terms 'philosophy of fruition' and

'anthropotheism' employed by Boyce Gibson in his "God with Us" may be restated in terms of the sesa-sesi relation. Fruition is not the attainment of hedonistic pleasure by means of egoistic effort, but is the end attained by self-effacement. It is the freedom of absolute self-surrender to the redemptive will of the sesi as svāmin. Moral experience has its true meaning only in the religious consciousness that the sesi alone is the actor. This view provides for the freedom of the self and also for the self-activity of the Lord as the ultimate determiner of human destiny. It steers clear of the extremes of monadic exclusiveness and monistic absorption. The absolute includes our selfhood and does not destroy it, and it is therefore the Self of selves smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest.

Visistādvaitic idealism admits the plurality of spiritual selves, but rejects the pluralistic or monadistic conclusion by regarding the jīva as pervaded or interpenetrated by the all-Self as seṣi. Religion transfigures the neuter Brahman, the 'It' into the living presence of the Lord as the 'Thou' and the sense of the 'Other' as the svāmin is essential to monism changed into monotheism to meet the demands of ethicoreligious experience. God is not the ultimate or the unmoved Mover or Designer beyond the cosmos, but is the intimate Self that is closer to us than our own breath. The spiritual withinness of the seṣi is an assurance of His sure grace, but the intimacy does not connote identity or indistinguishability, as the intimate Self is also without us as the transcendentally Holy.¹ Otherness does not mean externality or

¹ eşa ma âtmāntarhrdaye aniyān vrihērvā yavādvā sarşapādvā s'yāmākādvā s'yāmākatandulādvā eşa ma âtmāntarhrdaye jyāyān prthivyā jyāyān antarikṣāt jyāyān divō jyāyān ebhyō lökebhyah l sarva karmā sarvakāmah sarvagandhāh sarvarasāh sarvamidam abhyātto avākyanādarah eşa ma ātmāntarhrdaye etad brahma etam itah pretya abhisambhavitāsmi. —Ch. Up., III. xiv, 2 and 3.

exclusiveness. The relation of unity in duality thus brings out the immanence of Brahman and also His transcendence. Unity explains divine intimacy which is essential to redemptive love, and duality, the eternal otherness of the Holy beyond us by demanding reverence and self-surrender. When the jīva is caged in karma, it is exclusive and egoistic, but when it sheds its self-centredness and surrenders itself to the sesi in utter humility, a revolution is wrought in its nature, and its spiritual content is enriched by the inrush of divine grace. Faith in the sesi as the only svāmin or Deliverer leads to absolute fidelity and loyalty, and self-surrender is the highest fulfilment of freedom. The jīva finds itself in order to resign itself to the Self that sustains it. The self derives its substantiality from the ādheya aspect and its function from the nivantā aspect, and exists for the satisfaction of the sesi. The idea that the sesi is the means and the end of ethicoreligious consciousness entitles Visistādvaita to be called the monistic philosophy of fruition and activism or theistic monism, as it does justice to the claims of the jīva as a self and the sesi as the Self of the self, and solves the dualism between human freedom and divine determinism.1

The svāmi-dāsa relation is rooted in the living faith that Bhagavān as svāmin alone is the Lord of our being, and in the feeling of absolute dependence of the jīva on Him. Dāsyam or service is not prostration to God as enforced obedience is the pathological expression of a slave mentality which makes Deity a capricious demoniacal despot and the creature a cringing crawling servitor, but is the self-gift of the ātman that is not the slave of sense and sensibility or indriva

 $<sup>^1\,</sup>cf$ . Spinoza. The Self is the eye with which the Seer of all things sees Himself and knows Himself to be divine.

kinkara, but is the autonomous sovereign of the ethical realm that exalts itself by submitting to the will of the svāmin and is Bhagavadkinkara or the servant of God. The motto 'I serve' (Ich Dien) was the spiritual motive of Bharata and Lakṣmaṇa, and the free man's worship is really like that of the wise Hanumān who, by serving Rāma, his Lord, could conquer the whole universe.

The concept of the jīva as a prakāra or mode of the prakārin is enriched by the prakārin being regarded as a personality. There is a difference between a quality and a relation. While a quality is the quality of a substance, a relation is between two substances. The jīva is now conceived not as a mere quality of Brahman as its aprthaksiddha visesana but as a self related to the Supreme Being as sesi. Relational experience rightly understood is not self-contradictory but is inter-subjective intercourse and loving relation between God and man, and enriches spiritual consciousness. The idea of God as an extra-cosmic Designer involves an external relation between the finite self and the infinite which is as prejudicial to religion as the absolute of metaphysics arrived at by the neti method of the logical intellect. The absolute is not mutable like matter nor karma-ridden like the jīva, but is the paramapurusa that permeates all things and is the inner Self of all selves. The self is a centre of immediate experience and is a person and not a thing, but it has a sense of finitude. The seea exists in the seei and for the seei. While the seei is self-conscious and self-conditioned, the sesa derives its substantiality from Him and depends absolutely on His will. The western terms, spirit, soul and self, are not free from the defects of animism, anthropomorphism and personalism.

The finite self is the atman which is different from matter, life and mind, and abides for ever as an eternal entity. Paramātman is the Self of all selves and is immanent in them without being tainted by their imperfections of avidyā and karma. The term personality applied to paramatman requires clear definition by contrast with the jīvātman. It is different from the mind-body made of the stuff of prakrti and the jīvātman conditioned by karma and therefore the application of the human analogy is not quite relevant and adequate. The will of Isvara differs from the will of man, and He is absolutely pure and perfect and does not suffer from self-contradiction. Man is made in the image of God and it is false anthropomorphism to say that God is made in the image of man. It is crude teleology to attribute the world-order to a beneficent Providence who has designed everything externally for the good of man. If nature is bountiful, it is also red in tooth and claw. But prakrti is a non-moral process of nature, and good and bad and pleasure and pain are entirely determined by the moral law of karma. The divine purpose consists in the deification of the self by paramatman entering into it and atmanising The will of *Isvara* is redemptive and the making of muktas is the supreme end of the mundane order. Brahman as the sesi is not the personal God of western theism as that view ignores the truth of the antaryamin or indwelling Self. The absolutist criticism that personality, human and divine, involves the antithesis between the self and the non-self and that God is less than the all-inclusive absolute, has therefore no bearing on the Visistādvaitic view of the sesi. The term suprapersonal may be equated with it, if the distinction between prakrti, purusa and purusottama or sesi is borne in mind, and the religious consciousness of burusottama or sesi is contrasted with the spiritual nature of the atman and the mechanical view

of prakṛti. The philosophy of religion expounds the identity of existence and value by the comprehensive term of the absolute as paramātman that is not an 'It' or a 'He', but a supra-personal self that enters into matter with the jīva with a view to ātmanise it. The relation between the sesi and the sesa is personal and spiritual only in this sense, and the concepts of svāmin in terms of the Fatherhood and the Motherhood of the Deity bring out symbolically the spiritual experience of this relation in different forms. These experiences may now be briefly considered.

The concept of the Fatherhood of God connotes more spiritual intimacy than the external view of Isvara as the Lord or King, and marks a transition from the attitude of the subject of a king to that of sonship or putratva. The true Infinite is not the Almighty but the giver of all good, and every jīva is an image of the Infinite. Isvara is not a mere life-force or creative will, but a self-communicating love and the conserver of the eternal values of life. The Creator sows the seed of the self into the womb of matter and makes it into His own image. The divineness of the self consists in its regaining the quality of godliness and the eternal values of life. Prakrti is moulded for the making of the cetana and every jīva is, as it were, the son of God, and is the heir to immortal life and joy. The theistic idea of God as the Father of all is a living faith in the Lord of Paramapada or the supreme abode, entering into the self with a view to redeeming it from its career of self-alienation and sinfulness and transforming it into His own likeness or sārūbya and sāyujya. Theism, in the strict sense, holds that the Lord is the life-giver and also a law-giver, who demands absolute obedience to the law of righteousness, and burns with holy wrath against the offender

who defies His will. Creative unity pre-supposes the uniqueness of the Creator and the fidelity of the creature to God the Father, and collision with His will entails punishment. He elects the good and eliminates the wicked, and is thus a saviour and a judge. He accepts the good and the godly, and hurls the sinner into hell. Meek submission to the will of the Father, in utter self-abasement and prayerfulness. is pleasing to Him, and merits justification and redemption. The act of prayer arises from the inner attitude of prayerfulness; it is not a vain repetition of words in a mood of self-righteousness, nor bargaining with God for worldly goods, but is the absolute trust in the Father, which consists in the thought "Thy will be done." Sonship extols the childlike simplicity and instinctive fidelity of the jīva to the Father without the sophistry of the dialectician and the service mentality of the subject. The son then knows the Father and the Father knows the son, and their reunion and the attainment of godlikeness by the jīva are the flower and fruition of the moral religion of the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of the jīva or pitr-putra-sambandha. Thus understood, the idea of the Father of all is entirely different from that of the father complex of psycho-analysis and the anthropomorphism of theology, higher or lower. Every jīva is divine and its divineness consists in regaining the quality of godlikeness.

When religion is conceived in terms of will and justice, it demands the adoration of the Creator as the Father of all or jagat pitā; but in the religion of redemption, justice is transformed into mercy. Mahā Lakṣmī resides in the heart of religion as the embodiment of saving grace. She is the concretion of krpā and kāruṇya and offers an eternal assurance to

erring humanity that the reign of righteousness is at heart also the reign of redemptive mercy. The Lord is the dispenser of justice according to merit or karma-phala-dātā, though He is the saviour, and justice is an insistence on the fulfilment of the moral law by retribution and recompense. But retribution is transformed into forgiving love. Law is pervaded by love and overpowered by tenderness. Laksmī lives in the everblooming lotus of creative life, and is the heart of divinity. She depends absolutely on the Lord (bāratantrya), belongs to Him only (ananyārha sesatva) and is depended on by the sesa. As the link of love, she mediates between the infinite that is omnipotent and the finite that is impotent, and transforms the majesty of law into the might of mercy. Dayā has supernal beauty and sweetness. By her beauty Laksmī lures the Lord and turns Him into the saviour; she draws the sinner by her sweetness, and the sinner is saved by entire submission to His will. Thus, in the ethical religion of Visistādvaita or S'rī Vaisnavism, the metaphysical truth of the absolute as the Supreme Self and as sarīrin and the jīva as His aprthaksiddha visesana is restated in terms of the non-dualism of sriyahpati as the creator of the world and the conserver of values. To the mumuksu the Lord and S'rī are one, though, to the analytic intellect, they may appear as different and discrepant. The ethical idea of justice and dandadharatva and the religious idea of redemption and dayā are reconciled in ethical religion. It has its roots in justice and fruition in forgiveness. The Lord rules by law and S'rī lives by love, and the two are indissoluble and eternally wedded to each other. While in Iudaism and other schools of monotheism controlled by ethical ideas, law dominates love, in mystic religions love overflows law. Ethical monism co-ordinates and controls the two sides by the

non-dual unity of law and love. To the mumukṣu who seeks God and is sought by Him, his faith in sriyaḥpati is changed into a soul-sight of the two as one, and, like the fragrance of the flower, the luminosity of light and the embodied soul, Nārāyaṇa and  $S'r\bar{\imath}$  are indistinguishable. The ontological problem whether  $S'r\bar{\imath}$  is finite or infinite is not so important to the mumukṣu as the problem of mukti, and, judged from this point of view, the faith in  $S'r\bar{\imath}$  as the concretion of karuṇā and the heart of divinity is vital to the religion of redemption.

Atmadasya is the realisation of the atman as different from the bodily-self made by prakrti and the three gunas and is the gift of the self-realised atman to sriyahpati who is its real self. The self has monadic being and is at the same time a mode of God. The more it sheds its spurious individuality made of ahankāra and the dross of sensuality, the more godly it becomes. Self-gift or ātmadāsya changes the ego-centric outlook into Isvara-centric insight and the arc of individuality becomes so enlarged that the circumference is everywhere. In self-gift, exclusive selfishness alone is abandoned and not the self. Dāsyatva connotes self-gift to God, its inner Ruler, in the vertical sense, and the attribute of serviceability to other jīvas in the horizontal sense. This truth may be formulated as the idea of God as sriyahpati or divine Fatherhood and Motherhood, and the fraternity of all jīvas as regards their essential nature. It brings out the spiritual intimacy between paramatman and jīvātman more truly than the ideas of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man alone. Every jīva is made in the image of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ananyā rāghaveņāham bhāskareņa prabhā yathā.—*Rāmāyaṇa*, Sundara-kānda, XXI, 15.

Paramātman, and has His eightfold perfections in so far as they are not obscured by avidyā-karma; and all jīvas are alike in so far as their essential intelligence is one. In their spiritual nature all jīvas are one, as they are selves different from the embodiment of prakrti. It is the bodily feeling that separates a Devadatta who is a god from a Yajñadatta that is a dog, and fosters the separatist consciousness and hatred. But as selves, all jīvas are alike, though not identical, and in their essential intelligence they are one. The social ethics of Visistādvaita is thus founded on the solidarity of the spiritual universe and on the fraternity of all jīvas. The philosopher, who has realised the ātman, has the spiritual consciousness of samatva or the similarity of all jīvas; but, when the philosopher becomes religious, he knows that Paramātman is the meaning of his self and the means and end of his conduct. The self belongs to God, exists for His satisfaction, and surrenders itself to His redemptive mercy. Bhagavad kainkarya or service to God implies service to all jīvas. It extends in its meaning to ācārya kainkarya or service to the guru, who has the mercy of God without His juridical severity, service to bhagavatas who have devoted their lives to the worship of the Supreme and ultimately to all jīvas, owing to the indwelling of Divinity in their hearts. Vișnu pervades the universe as its Self and communicates His love to all beings and the whole Vaisnavised world pulsates with dayā. The true Vaisnavite prefers renewed births as an opportunity for spiritual service to the suffering jīvas to his own attainment of salvation and security, and he never rests satisfied till all jīvas are freed from the ills of life. He makes no distinction between the elect and the eliminated or between wheat and chaff. The Visistadvaitic ideas of the indwelling of God in all jīvas and of jīvakārunyā leading

attractive than truth and goodness, and Visistādvaita is the only religion that recognises the eternal value of beauty as an essential factor in the divine plan of soul-making. While the Vedānta Sūtras systematise the truths of Vedānta and the Gītā formulates its ethics, the Bhagavata intuits the nature of Brahman as bhuvana sundara or the Beauty of the world that is expressed in nature and is not exhausted by it. The cosmos is concord and not discord, and is the creative expression of the divine līlā or sport of love, and the Lord vivifies the jīva by sowing the seed of His primal beauty into its inner being. beauties of nature and the fair forms of human and celestial beings are but partial revelations of the unsurpassed beauty of Brahman. Reality is essentially beautiful, but the worldling steeped in sensuality renders it ugly. When, however, the worldling turns into a mystic, his vision is transformed. and he communes with Beauty, and is lost in the ecstasy of that communion. Visistādvaitic aesthetics is a systematic exposition of the nature of Brahman as bhuvana sundara and has more value than the ideas of Brahman as adhara and niyantā. Though it may not fit into the triad of ādhāra, nivantā and s'esi, it satisfies the triple ideals of value-philosophy familiarly known as truth, goodness and beauty.

Aesthetics as a philosophy deals with the discovery of beauty and its criticism. Its nature and scope can be determined by a constructive criticism of the theories advocated by its different western exponents in the light of the *Upanisadic* method of spiritual elimination or induction. The naturalistic view of the beautiful merges aesthetics into

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Vide the author's work, The Philosophy of the Beautiful, for a detailed study of what is summarised here.

physics and traces it to the harmony that somehow arises in the hang of things. The beautiful can be explained mechanically by analysing its elements like symmetry, variety and smoothness. The next is the biological theory, which derives it from the vital functions. The play impulse is, according to it, the spontaneous expenditure of surplus energy. Beauty is also genetically explained as the bye-product of the sexual urge. Phallic and Freudian literature is the development of sexual monstrosity and is the explanation of the normal by the abnormal, and it has little religious value. The third is the psychological view which describes beauty in terms of sense-impressions and their harmonious associations resulting in the agreeable feeling of pleasure. The pleasure theory, that a thing is beautiful if it causes pleasure, is too wide, and the converse is not true. All these theories explain the higher by the lower and fail to recognise the intrinsic nature of beauty, which shines like a star in its own light and has a self-communicating value. Beauty is not the quality of a thing that causes pleasure to the subject, nor is it a subjective creation. It is an immediate spiritual experience exalted by disinterested imagination, and is therefore the object of universal appreciation and satisfaction. Beauty, as an intuitional expression, has more aesthetic value than beauty as a dialectic unity like that of Hegel. Dialectics, however, has no direct influence on aesthetics. Aesthetics, as an organ of philosophy, defines beauty as an essential quality of Reality, which is transfigured into a mystic vision. In this way, the science of beauty is reinterpreted as a philosophy first by a process of creative criticism and then as a mystic view. Art criticism may be made in a realistic and idealistic way. While the realist relies on the representation of external beauty, the idealist defines beauty as a mental construction and

an inner contemplation, and makes art subjective. Visistādvaita corrects these extremes by explaining beauty as both immanent in nature and transcendent. Beauty is also evaluated from the standpoints of classicism and romanticism. The former type follows the a priori way, accepts absolute standards. and breeds the attitude of loyalty and reverence to tradition. But the romantic temper revolts against dogmatism and scholasticism, and delights in self-creative freedom and spontaneity. Its motto is not acceptance but adventure, and it is expression. for the sake of expression. But the Visistadvaitic view of rasa and dhvani avoids scholasticism and sentimentalism, when it insists on the intuition of the beautiful as the fulfilment of a disciplined mind freed from sensual ugliness. Aesthetics as art criticism applies the criteria of immanence and transcendence, and elevates the science and art of aesthetics into a philosophy as the critique of the creative impulse. It is the intuitive expression of infinite beauty through the medium of the finite, and it portrays the beauties of nature and the embodied self as partial revelations of the absolute beauty of God as param jyōtis or the supreme shining self and bhuvana sundara without any shade of ugliness.

Aesthetics, like ethics and epistemology, is ultimately rooted in metaphysics. In modern western thought it was Kant who first recognised the autonomous value of the beautiful; but he defined it subjectively as a construction by contemplative imagination. Post-Kantian thought, like that of Schelling and of Hegel, formulated aesthetic philosophy, and it was further developed in the absolutism of Bradley and Bosanquet. To Schelling, the pantheistic idealist, art is the only organ of philosophy, and it is by an organic view and aesthetic intuition and not by scientific understanding that the

artist-philosopher knows the harmony of things, which pulsates rhythmically in all beings. The absolute is the identity of nature and spirit. The universe is a work of art, and nature itself is a great poem. Nature is not dead but alive, and has kinship with man. It evolves and becomes self-conscious in man; and, in artistic intuition, the absolute becomes fully conscious of its creative activity. Hegel stresses the rational, as constrasted with the romantic, side of the world of experience and regards philosophy as conceptual knowledge and not as artistic intuition. The absolute mind reveals itself dialectically in art, religion and philosophy, and art is the lowest stage, as it represents sensible knowledge and not spirit. Beauty is the ideal of art, and its evolution is symbolic, classical and romantic. The first is the primitive pantheism of the east, which shows the inadequacy of form and content. classical stage is anthropomorphic, and in the final or romantic type, art transcends itself. The triumph of art is thus the defeat of art, when it becomes aware of itself, and passes into the absolute 'idea' of philosophy. Bradley also brings out the inadequacy of relational and discursive thought to know the absolute and regards beauty as self-contradictory and only an appearance of reality. Beauty is neither immediate nor harmonious in itself. It is self-existent, pleasant and self-contained; but what is pleasant should be pleasant for some one, and therefore it cannot be self-contained. If beauty is to be harmonious in itself, it should transcend this opposition. If it does so, it ceases to be beauty. But in the unity of the absolute, evil, error and ugliness are transmuted and they somehow contribute to its wealth. Bosanguet also thinks that beauty and ugliness are self-contradictory and are synthesised in the absolute. He defines beauty as what is aesthetically excellent, and it is feeling become plastic. The

philosophy of the beautiful fails to recognise the autonomy of aesthetic experience, the distinction between the beauties of nature and the spiritual self, and the difference between beauty and ugliness. Western absolutism, on the whole, has a bhedābheda tendency, and its fatal defect is the predication of ugliness to the absolute in its intrinsic or transmuted form.

Reality is essentially beautiful and it is ugliness that is a problem and not beauty, and the proneness to uglify the world is traceable to the creative freedom of the finite self and not to the infinite. Aesthetic philosophy thus affirms the intrinsic nature and eternal value of the beautiful as an essential quality of reality and not as an illusory appearance, and presupposes the distinction between the beautiful and the ugly. To say that the distinction is due to avidyā which is sublated by jñāna, or that ugliness heightens the effect of intricate and difficult beauty is to deny the value of aesthetics itself. The pluralistic view that there are atomic bits of beauty, which cannot be unified and harmonised, is as futile as the absolutistic contention that beauty and ugliness are relative and discrepant and that they should be absorbed or annulled. Ugliness is an empirical experience, but, in the transcendental state, it ought not to be. Plato is the foremost of the aesthetic thinkers of ancient Greece and his classical account of the absolute as the beautiful in ascending stages is highly suggestive owing to its kinship with Hindu thought. Bosanquet's exposition of the beautiful has the merit of recognising the interplay of form and matter in aesthetic appreciation, though it has to be Vedāntically reinterpreted. Beauty is formless, and yet has a form of its own. The form of beauty varies with its matter and determines its value. The soul of beauty vanishes if it is not embodied in its own idealised or spiritualised

medium. Beauty is in the look and feel of the medium The beauties of nature are less attractive than the fair forms of birds and other animals. The triumph of beauty is the creation of the human form with all its intricacy and stability; but absolute beauty has a transcendent charm and eternal value. Visistādvaita recognises the relativity of form and matter and constructs a ladder of beauty from earth to heaven, and its view of absolute beauty is finally transfigured into an enchanting vision. Ugliness is the result of the finite self being soiled by sensuality; but when the self is released from its dross, it realises itself as the embodiment of divine beauty.

The aesthetic philosophy of Visistādvaita transforms the Brahman of metaphysics and the Isvara of ethics into the bhuvana sundara of the Bhāgavata. The absolute of metaphysics becomes the beautiful God of aesthetic religion. The self-resplendent and unsurpassable beauty of Brahman is embodied in the universe, but exceeds its finiteness and imperfections. Brahman is niravayava or without parts and, in the ontological sense, transcends the psycho-physical changes of prakrti, and is nirguna. In the ethical sense He is free from the imperfections of the karma-ridden self and has infinite perfections. As the True of the true and the super-Subject, He is infinite and beyond all conceptual categories, and, at the same time, has an infinity of perfections. But, to the mumuksu, as a mystic who seeks the intimacy of communion, the ontological Beyond and the ethically Perfect have no value or attraction. It is aesthetics that mediates between metaphysics and ethics, and brings down heaven to earth, and elevates earth to heaven. Aesthetics is midway between sensuousness and spirituality, and bridges the gulf between the finite and the infinite. This truth is beautifully expressed in the triple idea

of Brahman as possessing svarūba, rūba and guna. His svarūba, as sat without a second as causa sui, cosmic ground and super-Subject, creates a feeling of remoteness. and His gunas arouse the sense of the Holy and the feeling of reverence. But His rūba or form as bhuvana sundara and Manmatha-manmatha acts as an aesthetic copula between His svarūba and His gunas and brings to light the attributes of intimacy and attractiveness, which are so vital to the mystic consciousness. Brahman that transcends the world of cit and acit enters into the atman with a view to deify it and, to satisfy the mumuksu who is a mystic. He individualises an abrākrta or super-sensuous form of His own with bewitching beauty designed to remove the fleshly feeling of the jīva and beautify it. The brilliant self that. as baram ivotis, illumines the sun and the stellar worlds is the inner beauty that illumines individuality. He, who dwells in the sun, the moon and the stars, whom the sun, the moon and the stars do not know, but whose body they are, is the inner Ruler Immortal.1 The golden Person within the solar orb is the Person that shines in the ātman with a divine form of infinite beauty. This beauteous form of Brahman is not a concession to the avidvā-ridden jīva caught up in the self-contradiction of the finiteinfinite, but is the incarnation of the super-sensuous Beauty that allures the self and ravishes it out of its fleshly feeling. The mundane beauty of Manmatha or Eros that soils the jīva is conquered by the supramundane beauty of bhuvana sundara, and He is therefore called Manmatha-manmatha or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> ya āditye tişihan ādityād antarah yamādityō na veda yasya ādityah s'arīram ya ādityam antarō yamayati eşa ta ātmā antaryāmyamṛtah.—Br. Up., III. vii. 9.

yas'candratārake tişthan candratārakād antaraḥ yam candratārakam na veda yasya candratārakam s'arīram yas'candratārakam antarō yamayati eṣa ta ātmā antaryāmyamrtah.—Br. Up., III, vii, 11,

Madana Mōhana and not Madana-dahana who transforms and transcends Eros but does not destroy him.

The cosmos is a concord and not a discord, and is a living expression of the beauty of Brahman. From the metaphysical point of view, creation is explained as the self-differentiation of the absolute in which Brahman wills to be the many and becomes the manifold of acetana and cetana. On the ethical view the immanent world ground becomes the eminent Isvara or moral ruler of the world. The avidyā theory of Advaita and the barināma-vāda of Bhedābheda are criticised by, and restated as, the ethical theory of karma, which traces the evolution of the species and their variations to the moral differences caused by the karma of the individual. The idea of an extra-cosmic Deity with an increasing cosmic purpose militates against the ideas of omniscience and perfection. The theory of līlā remedies this defect by insisting on the primacy of aesthetic consciousness and regarding the cosmic process as the spontaneous creative expression of Brahman as the divineartist. Brahman is pure and perfect, and His will is eternally self-realised. But His omnipotence and perfection cannot bereconciled with the reality of evil and the fact of unmerited suffering. This is the most irrational and worst of all possible worlds, and no merciful divinity would make a world so full of evil and suffering. But aesthetic philosophy, as the completion of metaphysics and ethics, elevates the problem to the level of mystic intuition and gives a new meaning toexistence and experience. While thought dissects life and creates ultimate doubts, moral earnestness breeds a sense of responsibility and sinfulness. The aesthetic consciousness. disciplined by logic and freed from the uglifying effect of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II, i. 33.

karma sees everything with the eye of Brahman, and the world view is transfigured into an artistic vision. Creation is then intuited as the play or sport of the divine Artist, and is regarded as His recreation or līlā. Srsti is the creative joy of self-expression and self-division and the evolution of nāma-rūba is the evolution of infinite forms of beauty from the infinite Beauty that has formless form. The world of space-time is the eternal interplay between the static and the dynamic aspects of beauty. The free duration of time intuited as creative evolution but spatialised by the intellect is as one-sided as the static theory of reality which denies teleology, and explains the universe mathematically in terms of space. But the creative activity of God in the world of space and time or space-time is a symphony without any jarring note. Each self is like a note in the musical scale,1 and marks a rhythm in the dance of divine beauty. The world is a poem of beauty, and its sonorousness is imparted to every part of it and makes it vibrate with its music. The divine Artist pours beauty into nature with a view to removing the fleshly feeling and other blemishes of the finite self, beautifying it and playing the game of love with it.

The beauty of Brahman is self-resplendent, and it radiates its entrancing joy to the world by beautifying the self. This art is known in mystic literature as the process of spiritual alchemy. The divine Artist assumes five enchanting forms of beauty in order to beautify the ugly self, which is sullied by viṣaya kāma or the lusts of the flesh. These forms are the transcendental or para, the infinite or vyūha, the immanent or antaryāmin, the incarnational which is historical or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., I. i, 1, p. 67; S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 96 and V. P., II. xiv, 32.

avatāra and the permanent or arca. The Upanisads glorify the transcendental beauty of Brahman as param jyōtis (jyōtiṣām jyōtis)1 where the sun does not shine, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor lightning. The Vedanta Sutras identify the Light, which shines above this heaven, higher than everything else, in the highest world, beyond which there are no higher worlds, with the highest Person of infinitesplendour in the supreme world of eternal glory or nitya vibhūti,3 of which this phenomenal world is only a partial expression due to His yōga-māyā. In that world of beauty Yonder, nature as suddha satva shines for ever as spaceless space without the passing shadows of parinama, bodying forth the ideas of absolute beauty. The Pañcarātra as Brahmōpaniṣad enshrining the foundational truths of Vedānta exalts the vyūha form of beauty and the Purānas glorify the sleeping beauty that reposes on the milky ocean of infinity and, with perfect art, portray the creation of the cosmos as the awakening to life of the archetypal forms of beauty. The divine Artist is not an arch-illusionist that projects an as-if world nor an extra-cosmic personality that has an ever increasing purpose, but is an alchemist who makes a beautiful soul by removing its dross of sensuality or kāma and plays with it the game of love. The third aspect of divine love is the antaryamin or Beauty that dwells in the lotus heart of all living beings as their inner Enchanter making them pulsate with its creative life and participate in its inner joy.

¹ tac cubhram jyōtiṣām jyōtis tad yadātmavidō viduḥ ll na tatra sūryo bhāti na candratārakam nemā vidyutō bhānt ikutōyam agniḥ.—Mund. Up., II. ii, 9 and 10. Vide, p. 109.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> jyotis'caranābhidhanāt.—V. S. I. i. 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> atha yad atah parö divö jyötir dipyate vis'vatah prɨthesu sarvatah prɨthesu anuttamesu uttamesu lökesu idam vava tad yad idam asminnantah puruse jyötih.—Ch. Up., III. xiii, 7.

The body is not composed of dust or conceived in sin, but is Brahmapuri or the city of Brahman, and is a living temple of divine beauty. The devas delight in dwelling in the human body and Deva-deva, the God of all gods, as bhuvana sundara, abides in its daharākāsa with a view to vivifying the moral self and making it immortal. The great Alchemist transmutes the ascetic that shuns the body as a house of sin into a hedonist allured by the beauty of God and entranced by it.

The Rāmāyana and the Bhāgavata have specialised in the philosophy of the beautiful and have glorified the avatāras as the incarnation of the super-sensuous and suprapersonal beauty of Brahman in sensuous forms. The wisdom of Vedānta is summed up in the avatāra rahasya, which is the most sacred truth or uttama rahasva of revelation and which cannot be described by words or defined by thought. The incarnation is not an illusory appearance of the absolute (indra jāla) caught up in the contradictions of space-time-causality nor the embodied self with a psychophysically organised mind-body conditioned by karma and subject to birth and death. The beauteous form of the avatāra is abrākrta, not made of perishing brakrti nor the product of karma, but is self-determined and self-evolved. Even the view of ethical religion is not adequate when it describes the avatāra as the descent of Isvara into the empirical life of the jīva and the history of humanity in moments of cosmic moral crisis with a view to punish the wicked by taking away their tools of wickedness and reestablish the law of righteousness. The avatara satisfies the mystic yearning of the jñāni, who hungers for God and pines for the soul-sight of His enchanting beauty. The Ravisher of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ch, Up., VIII. i. 1.

souls is also a self-suffering God who cannot bear separation from His 'other,' and His captivating beauty is even physically enjoyable. The beauty of avatāra is elusive and not illusory or erroneous. It has a seductive and irresistible charm. The beauty of S'rī Rāma was so entrancing that the rsis and the võgis of the forest of Dandaka rapt in samādhi were spellbound and became the Gopis of Brndavan to relish its immortal bliss. The Bhāgavata is a poem par excellence of the dalliance of divine Beauty with the beloved beings of the enchanted land of Brndavan. The transcendent Beauty that is infinite and eternal, incarnates according to a divinely ordered plan on the metamorphosed beauty spot, Brndavan, with a world-bewitching form (trailokva kanta) to play the līla of love. The metaphysical concept of māvā is now changed into the aesthetic idea of the māyin or divine Artist. The silvery Yamunā glides on in ever-swelling joy, the trees bloom, the lotus and the lilies blossom, and the gentle wind spreads its fragrance, the birds sing their sweetest songs and all nature wears a festive garb. The shining gods abandon their celestial homes and the munis renouncing their meditation are drawn into this charmed circle by its strange spell of beauty. The Holy of holies who is absolutely free from evil (vogesvarīsvara) transforms Himself into the Ravisher of souls or Manmatha-manmatha, and it is only the pure in heart, that are free from the lusts of the flesh or trsnās, that can revel in the bliss of Krsna līlā. The righteousness of S'rī Rāma is consummated in the rapture of Kṛṣṇa līlā, and the Lord of beauty is jāra cōra s'ikhāmani, who steals away the hearts of all and ravishes them out of their fleshly feeling. The fifth abode of Beauty is the permanent incarnation of arca, in which the transcendental Beauty beyond the phenomenal world enters into the chosen forms of prakrti as vigraha.

Arca is not the idealised projection of creative imagination touched by religious feeling nor the symbolic expression of the infinite in the finite, but is the incarnation of divine beauty itself and the embodiment of His accessibility even in the world of sense-perception. Infinite Beauty enters into finite forms without losing His infinity and Isvaratva to commune with the devotee that longs for His contact and toinfinitise his aesthetic consciousness. Thus the sleeping beauty of kṣīrābdhi, the Ocean Pacific, reposing on infinity becomes the speaking beauty in the stone. those who have eyes can see the enchanting form, and only those who have ears can hear the divine song. The Alvars with a genius for intuiting the arca had a soul-sight of Beauty and their inspiring utterances are an invitation to humanity to share in the mystic rapture of such aesthetic communion.

The Visiṣṭādvaitic philosophy of art is ultimately founded on the idea that the beauty of Brahman leads to eternal bliss and the exposition of this truth brings out the vital relation between aesthetics or Alankāra S'āstra and Vedānta. In the synthetic philosophy of Visiṣṭādvaita, science and art are exhibited as a way of approach to Brahmajñāna and Brahmānanda. Alankāra S'āstra, as aesthetic science, has its ultimate meaning in the artistic philosophy of Brahman as the Beautiful and the Blissful. Every aesthetic experience has its emotional content, though every emotion is not aesthetic; and the theory of rasa is a basic concept in Hindu art. While every living being or jīva is attracted by beauty, man alone knows that he has such responsiveness, and constructs an aesthetic philosophy. When the philosopher not only thinks of beauty but is moved by it, he becomes an

artist and poet. Beauty is an intuition-expression, and, without a medium or sensuous content, it loses its soul. Poetry holds the sceptre among the arts, spatial and temporal, owing to its affinity to mystic experience. The poet, with his divine vision, catches a glimpse of the beauty that never was in nature, and, by the magic of his words, communicates its inner charm to others. Literature as poetry or kāvya is wordmagic, having a moving appeal and leading to immediate enjoyment. Rasa or spiritual exaltation is the very soul of poesy (vākyam rasātmakam) and is experienced by responsive minds, as aesthetic joy accompanies the contemplation of a bhāva. Rasa is the feel of a ruling aesthetic mood; it is not, like taste, a physical joy, but is an inner spiritual enjoyment. It is an intuition with its own artistic expression. Each rasa is sui generis and a specific feeling tone having its own aesthetic necessity and value, and is not a response to an alien situation. Being self-creative, a bhava involves the more of itself and its joy is fecundative. The immortal beauty of the Rāmāyana is intuited and cannot be linguistically explained on account of its infinite suggestiveness, sweetness and inner grace. These qualities have an eternal appeal to the heart of humanity. The aesthetic moods are classified according to their feeling tone into nine types, namely, bībhatsa or disgust. bhayānaka or fear, vīra or heroism, adbhuta or the marvellous. raudra or the angry, hāsya or the humorous, karuna or the pathetic, santa or the peaceful and srngara or love. Srngara rasa is the queen of the rasas, and has supreme value in aesthetic religion.

Aesthetic religion utilises the emotion of fear, anger, wonder and sex, and, by sublimating and spiritualising them, removes their sensual content and directs them Godward.

This view avoids the perils of sensualistic hedonism and asceticism, and makes feeling furnish the dynamic element of the religious motive. Voluptuousness is the exhibition of feeling in excelsis, and asceticism is its inhibition in excelsis, and both are fatal to aesthetic religion. Though Freudian psycho-anlaysis in its application to religion is an education in ugliness or nastiness, it has a negative value inasmuch as it has laid bare the evils of the disease of abnormal repression. But aesthetic religion is founded on normal psychology; it recognises the truth that the instincts can only be spiritual-. ised and not destroyed. The Bhāgavata, in its inimitable way, furnishes the raison de etre for the education of instinctive life, and offers hope even to the asuric type like Kamsa and S'isupala. It declares that those who with devotion direct their sexual passion or kāma, hatred or krōdha, fear or bhaya, feeling of friendship or sneha, feeling of comradeship or aikya and love or bhakti (sauhrda), ceaselessly to Hari, become one with Him and attain His likeness or tanmaya.1 The evil in them is destroyed by Hari and their goodness leads to godliness. In the alchemy of Krsna love, the blemish of every jīva is removed and the jīva is brahmanised. When the bhāvas are spiritualised, they become the essential factors of aesthetic religion. The vision of the cosmic form or visvarūba granted to Arjuna by the Lord is an instance of the sentiments of bhayanaka, vīra, raudra and adbhuta which are intrinsically spiritual. Arjuna was awe-struck by the vision of the formless form of Kṛṣṇa as Isvara, with its endless stretch of space and sweep of time, appearing as the world destroyer. The infinity and omnipotence of Isvara

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> kāmam krodham bhayam sneham aikyam sauhrdam eva ca l nityam harau vidadhatah yānti tanmayatām hi te ll

contrasted with the impotence and the infinitesimal nature of the jīva as the atomic self, generate the feeling of one's own insignificance and arouse the sentiment of reverence. Cosmic aesthetic pleasure results from the experience of the incongruities of life, and is opposed to serious-mindedness and lightheartedness. Nammāļvār enjoys the wonder of the selfcontradictions of the world play or viruddha vibhūti of the Māyin and seeks to laugh it away by trying to go beyond it. In the blending of the joy of the eternal realm and the tragic tension of the realm of samsāra, there results the aesthetic feeling that the cosmos has a comic touch. The Rāmāvana is the epic of the reign of karuṇā rasa, and with consummate poetic genius, to which there is no parallel, the other rasas are harmoniously blended with karunā by the rsi to arouse the mood of pity and develop it to perfection. S'ringāra rasa is the joy of seeking the beauty of sex and revelling in love as in the S'ākuntala and is regarded as the rasa par excellence, as it is the consummation of human love. Sex is the master device of nature to draw souls together, and cosmic creation is itself traced to the sat without a second realising itself as the male and female principles of life. The science of erotics or Kāma S'āstra is an aesthetic education, which consists in changing the brute feeling into human love and bringing about the psycho-physical at-one-ment of two souls. The joy of samslesa or the union of lovers is more than the logical satisfaction of the synthesis of opposites. The paradox of love lies in conquest by submission and the heightening of love by separation. Mystic idealism utilises the fidelity and mutualness given in strigara rasa, and elevates it to the level of the divine love of Rādhā and Āndāl. It is not erotism but the fulfilment of divine love, and the love of S'rī Kṛṣṇa as Manmatha-manmatha

<sup>1</sup> Nammāļvār, Tiruvoymozhi, VI. iii.

subdues Eros and turns the viṣaya kāma of the earth-bound selves into Bhagavad kāma of the bhakta, and sṛṅgāra rasa becomes Brahmarasa and Brahmānanda.

The attainment of bliss and the removal of sorrow are the end and aim of life; but the nature of bliss and the means of securing it can be determined only by Vedāntic aesthetics. To the materialistic and egoistic hedonist or Cārvāka, the highest good of life is the feeling of pleasure derived by the gratification of the cravings of the senses and of the animal appetite. What is pleasant or pleasurable for the moment has alone the greatest attraction. In a more moderate form, it is the pursuit of the pleasures of life as a whole under the guidance of prudence and these pleasures as different from the feeling of pleasure are the objects of sense presented to the burusa as desired ends or visava kāma. But when the desire is not satisfied, there is disappointment followed by krōdha and mental confusion. Sense-pleasures are desired, no doubt, but they are not desirable, as they are fleeting and defective. Pleasure and pain always go together, and reflection on the hedonistic values of life breeds the mood of pessimism and sick-mindedness. Pleasures excite the mind and exhaust it; they tickle us for the moment, and pass away the next moment. Even the pleasures of Svarga come and go, and they have no stability or inner value. Man finds satisfaction in the life of reason, aesthetic contemplation and altruistic service, and mental happiness is more valuable than the external pleasures derived from the objects of sense. More valuable than mental happiness is the spiritual joy of self-realisation or kaivalya. The knowledge of atman as contrasted with prakrti is an inner joy, which is qualitatively different from the pleasures of hedonism. While the pleasures of

prakṛti are transient and trivial, the joy of self-knowledge or kaivalya is stable, and is an instance of s'anti. But even this state is not the highest end, as it is ego-centric and may lapse into quietism. The value of Bhagavad kāma is higher than that of ātma kama and viṣaya kāma, and by intuiting the beauty of Brahman, the ātman is immersed in immortal bliss. Visistādvaita is the only religion that equates the absolute with the God of Beauty and Bliss and that may therefore be called aesthetic religion. In this regard, it is allied to mysticism, which may be explained as the spiritual yearning of the jīva for communion with its inner Self of Beauty and absorption in the ecstasy of such communion. The Upanisad pours out in unsurpassable poetry the beauty of this truth in the Anandavallī, the Bhūmavidyā and the Madhuvidyā.

The Taittiriva Upanisad says that all living beings are born in ananda, live, move and have their being in ananda and enter into it, and defines Brahman as anandamaya. The S'ruti employs a calculus of pleasures in an ascending scale of values, and ends with the highest bliss of Brahman. It is supreme and not to be surpassed, and cannot be adequately described and defined. The pleasures of the finite self ranging from earthly paradise to the perennial delights of Brahmā (as distinguished from Brahman) are tinged with pain, and pale into nothingness when compared to Brahmānanda. Though Brahman is the inner self of the jīva, it is not touched or tainted by its imperfections and is absolutely blessed. The term anandamaya does not connote maximum pleasure, implying the presence of pain, as the concepts of quantity and causality are only empirical categories applicable

 $<sup>^1</sup>$  änandäddhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante l<br/> änandena jātāni jīvanti l änandam prayantyabhisamvis'antiti ll $-Taitt.\ Up$ ., Bhṛguvalli, 6.

to the self of samsāra, and have no transcendental use. Besides, the mantra which defines Brahman as satyam, jñānam and anantam also defines it as abounding bliss and, in the light of the rule of coordination, the term anandamaya connotes Brahman and not the jīva. The Upaniṣad "He who knows Brahman attains the highest" distinguishes between the self that attains bliss and Brahman that is attained. Brahman, the cosmic self, is also the inner self of the jīva, and it finally imparts its bliss to it and brahmanises it. The enjoyment of Brahmarasa by the freed self does not connote the absolute identity of the experiencing subject and the experienced object. The Madhuvidyā is also a Brahmopanisad, as it explains the nectar of the sun extracted by the devas in a Vedic way as the bliss of Brahman that is the Light of lights and the inner Self of the sun. The self within the eye is Brahman the beautiful and the blissful's. He is called vāmanīh for He bestows all blessings, bhāmanīh for He is the jyōtis or splendour that shines in all the worlds. He is ka or pleasure and kha, the all-pervading infinite. In the exposition of the Bhūmavidyā, Rāmānuja, following the author of the Sūtras (I. iii. 7-8), concludes that Brahman is bhuman or infinite bliss. By intuiting Brahman the freed self intuits His vibhūti or aisvarya, where one sees nothing else; hears nothing else and knows nothing else.4 There is nothing apart from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Brahmavid āpnōti param l tad eṣābhyuktā l satyam jĩiānam anantam brahma l—*Taitt*, *Up*., Ānandavalli, 1.

² asau vā ādityō deva madhu.—Ch. Up., III. i. 1.

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  ya eşökşini puruşö dṛs'yate eşa ātmeti hövāca etad amṛtam abhayam etad brahma l—Ch.  $U\dot{p}$ ., IV. xv. 1, eşa u eva vāmanih—IV. xv. 3. eşa u eva bhāmanih—IV. xv. 4. prānōbrahma kambrahma khambrahma . . . . yadvāvakam tadevakham yadeva kham tadevakamiti—IV. x. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> yatra nānyatpas'yati nānyat s'rṇōti nānyad vijānāti sa bhūmah atha yatrānyat pas'yati anyat s'rṇōti anyad vijānāti tadalpam yō vai bhūmā tad amṛtam |—Ch. Up., VII. xxiv. 1.

sa eva adhastāt sa upariṣṭhāt sa pas'oāt sa purastāt sa dakṣṇataḥ sa uttarataḥ sa evedam sarvam iti l-Ch. Up., VII. xxv. 1.

Brahman, and the mystic who rejoices in the self and revels in it, sees everything with the eye of Brahman, and obtains everything everywhere. Pleasure is what is agreeable to man, and pain is what is disagreeable to him. To a patient suffering from excessive bile, drinking water which is pure and agreeable is not pleasant; but to the healthy man it is wholesome and pleasant. In the same way the jīva suffering from avidyā-karma views the world as distinct from Brahman and subjects himself to the ills of samsāra. But the mukta freed from avidyā-karma intuits the same world as the aisvarya of Brahman, and feels no pain or sorrow at all. The intuition of Brahman as the All-Self leads to infinite and immortal bliss. The author of the Sūtras following S'ruti thus concludes that the term anandamaya refers to Brahman and not to the jīva or pradhāna and Visistādvaita with its genius for coordination and harmonising apparent contradictions accepts the Sūtras and the S'ruti and affirms that the absolute as the sat without a second is anandamaya without any shadow of imperfection, and is the Highest Self.

The Advaitin also follows the same line of reasoning and comes to the same conclusion, but his pet theory of Māyāvāda overpowers his aesthetic inclinations; and he suddenly arrests with his destructive dialectics the free flow of aesthetic intuition. He concludes the adhikarana by saying that the self consisting of bliss is the highest self and then springs a surprise by contradicting it. The term anandamaya has a false meaning and a true meaning. The text seems to have a context, but it has really a relative value alone as the absolute is not limited logically and linguistically. From the point of view of the author of the Sūtras, Brahman is ānandamaya but, on the grounds of

Māyāvāda, the concept of anandamaya involves the selfcontradiction of māyā, and has to be rejected for three reasons. The whole topic refers to the absolute beyond the appearances, when it lays down the truth: yatovāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha. The nature of Brahman cannot be described or defined, because reality is beyond all relational thought. Thought is self-discrepant, as it claims to know reality, but fails in its attempt. It appears to be real, but is not real. Every act of predication is, therefore, ultimately futile and false, and is shipwrecked in its entrance to the harbour of reality. The term anandamaya seeks to define the nature of Brahman by attributing to Brahman the quality of ananda. But Brahman is beyond all ideas of predication, and therefore the definition is futile and should be rejected. Secondly, the term anandamaya cannot refer to Brahman as the suffix maya implies modification or vikāra as in the case of annamaya, prānamaya and manomaya. Whatever is made or modified is an effect and, is imperfect, and, if Brahman is anandamaya or made of bliss, it is defective. The concept of causality does not adequately expound the nature of the absolute. It is therefore held by the Advaitin that determination is negation. Brahman as the infinite is the not-finite. and the quality of anandamaya is a limiting concept, which cannot be ascribed to Brahman. The symbology employed in the whole topic is to be contrasted with the metaphysical exposition of the absolute. Thirdly, even if the suffix maya connotes not vikāra, but prācurya as stated in the Sūtra I. i. 14, it implies maximum bliss with minimum pain and the moment we think the absolute, we give it an empirical dress and finitise it. The topic thus conveys a knowledge of the absolute or nirguna Brahman and the concept of anandamaya intimates the nature of savisesa Brahman. The absolute is

the intuitional highest and is ananda, but Iswara is anandamava, the logical highest or the highest conceptual reading of the absolute.

Bhāskara's criticism of the theory of two Brahmans is violent, as he condemns it as a case of sruticide or srutihāni (sacrifice of scripture) and as rutakalbana or mere fabrication. The Upanisad follows the a priori road that the knower of Brahman attains the highest and repudiates the agnostic view that the absolute transcends relational thought. The Brahma Sūtras would be stultified if thought could not reach reality, and the 'That' is beyond the 'What'. It is the first principle of philosophy that Brahman can be apprehended by the mind purified by meditating on Brahman and not by the impure in heart. When consciousness is freed from the effect of karma, it can intuit the infinite. The term anandamaya refers to the blissfulness of Brahman and not to the absolute identity between Brahman and bliss. Nirguna Brahman is bare being without any positive content, and therefore the bliss of Brahman is not the bliss that is Brahman. If predication is a perversion of reality and not its affirmation, the result is scepticism and there will be no theory of bliss at all. Ananda in the state of mukti is the fulness of bliss and mukti is not the negation of sorrow as the Vaisesika says. The third view that the abundance of bliss implies the co-existence of pain is countered by the argument that the topic adopts a calculus to prove that the bliss of Brahman is the highest in the scale and not the absolute beyond thought. Just as lamp light fades into nothing in the presence of sun light, the pleasures of life are as nothing compared to the ecstasy of Brahmānubhava or the experience of Brahman. It is the contention of some Advaitic aestheticians

that just as white light is refracted and stained, the absolute bliss that is Brahman acquires the colour of saguna Brahman. This view is untenable because the absolute can never be reflected or refracted. Besides, aesthetics cannot fit into Advaita and a consistent Advaitin has to reject the ultimacy of aesthetic values, in the same way in which he rejects those of ethics and religion. If the white light of rasa or bliss is refracted by avidyā and becomes aesthetic joy, then aesthetics ceases to have any value, and there would be no theory of rasa at all. Vedānta Desika turns the tables when he refers to the awakening of bhakti as sankalpa sūrvodava and contrasts it with the rise of Advaitic consciousness as prabodha candrodaya or moony effulgence. Analogy apart, it is inconceivable that bliss can experience itself. Though the lover and the beloved become one and are lost in bliss, there is only coalescence of content and not identity. The experients are different though the experience is non-dual.

The philosophy of aesthetics is as valid as metaphysics and ethical thought, for it is the enquiry into the nature of Brahman as the beautiful and the blissful. As a speculative philosophy, it affords a new insight into the realistic and idealistic aspects of beauty, and synthesises its formal and material character. As Visistādvaitic aesthetics, it defines Brahman as bhuvana sundara and Manmatha-manmatha and identifies cosmic beauty with the inner beauty of the self. It then expounds the five beautiful forms of Brahman and the different kinds of rasas giving the highest value to sringāra rasa in its spiritualised aspect. Beauty leads to bliss. After controverting the nirguna theory, it insists on the aesthetic definition of Brahman as bhuvana sundara and ānandamaya and concludes that the absolute of metaphysics is the

ānandamaya of the philosophy of art. Visiṣṭādvaita is thus the only philosophy of religion that recognises the eternal value of beauty and defines Brahman as the beautiful and the blissful.

## CHAPTER IX

## ONTOLOGY VI : BRAHMAN AS THE S'ARĪRIN

THE analysis of the metaphysical, ethical and aesthetic sides of spiritual experience in terms of ādheyatva, vidheyatva and sesatva dissects the integral intuition of Brahman into bloodless categories, and it is the task of Visistādvaita as a true synthetic view of experience to coordinate the values of truth, goodness and beauty and restore their living unity. The metaphysical problem "what is that by \*knowing which everything else is known?" is solved by the definition of Brahman as the ground of the universe and as the adheva or source and centre of the universe. This definition insists on the divine immanence of the universe of cit and acit and Brahman as the Being of our being, the True of the true, the Light of lights and the Eternal of eternals. It states further that Brahman is in nature but is not nature, as held by naturalistic pantheism. Brahman is in the self but is not the self as viewed by the monists. All things live, move and have their being in Brahman. They draw their substantiality from it. It is their svarūbāsrava. But Brahman is not affected by the changes of nature or the imperfections of the jīva. The absolute of ontology as the sat without a second is the truth that God alone is the Real.

But it is not bare being or the 'That' without the 'what,' a unit among other units, or a systematic unity; it is real reality which communicates its life to cit and acit. The absolute is not only the Being of being, but is the supersubject that is the brius and presupposition of predication and the ultimate reason of things, the universal which. while giving meaning to the universe, exceeds its content. The true Subject does not sublate thought but is its ultimate source. It is the true Infinite different from the mathematical infinite of quantity; and, from the cosmological point of view, it enters with the finite self as its sarīra into nature, evolves names and forms and thus becomes the cosmic ground. The cause or upādāna itself becomes the effect or upādeya. The infinite is in the finite without losing its infiniteness. In this way, epistemology, ontology and cosmology as branches of metaphysics determine the nature of Brahman as absolute truth and consciousness and as the worldground. The metaphysician who seeks Brahman ascends to the heights of the Upanisad and views Brahman as the immanent unity and indwelling reason of all things, the sat or substance that exists per se, the jyōtis or Self that is the thinker of thinkers, and the absolute or supreme Being. Metaphysics is the food of thought but, in its zeal for abstraction and dialectic analysis, it often misses its true spirit and gives stone instead of bread. The intellect is justified in its desire to know Brahman (Brahmajijñāsa), but it becomes dry-as-dust intellectualism if it leads to mere dialectics or logic chopping and theological sophistry.

The logico-mathematical method tends to depersonalise the self and deprive it of its moral value. Brahman is not only the immanent, but is also the transcendental, cause of the

world. The idea of mere divine immanence, as held by pantheists, commits itself to the perils of the theory of Brahman evolving into the cosmos (Brahma parināmavāda) and the follies of the pantheist's identification of Brahman with the world of evil and sin. It paralyses moral consciousness. This defect is overcome by voluntarism or the theory of God as the author of all good which exalts the ethical eminence of Brahman as nivantā and the righteousness of Isvara as the moral ruler of the world who dispenses justice according to the karma of the iīva. This view stresses the primacy of Practical Reason or the absoluteness of moral consciousness and transforms the metaphysical view of the absolute as the whole into the view of the Holy One of ethical religion. Ethical idealism marks the transition from the idea of Brahman as pure Being into that of Brahman as Isvara or niyantā and may be termed theistic monism. The universe is a realm of righteousness, and divine justice functions, through the moral freedom of the finite self. The idea of Isvara as righteous Ruler and Redeemer corrects the extremes of fatalism and determinism due to divine will. The moral self realises its freedom by subduing the self of ahankāra, attunes its will to that of Isvara and views every act of karma as kainkarya. The jīva not only derives its substantiality from Brahman (swarūpāsraya) but also depends entirely on His redemptive will (sankalpāsraya) and exists wholly for His satisfaction; this view steers clear of the pitfalls of pantheism and pluralism. The omnipotence of Isvara is self-limited by His redemptive love, working through the moral law of karma, in the history of humanity. The infinite love of God is eternally wedded to the majesty of His law in the dual personality of S'rīman Nārāyaṇa and enters into history in the interests of universal redemption. The jīva realizing its absolute dependence on the Lord and S'rī freely dedicates

itself to divine service. This self-surrender enriches the consciousness of freedom instead of enslaving it. Ethical idealism or monism has the merit of establishing the unity of finite endeavour and the supreme end and of viewing the s'esi as both upāya and upeya; its idea of the Holy One arouses the numinous sense of Isvara as the inspirer of awe revealed in His visvarūpa darsana to Arjuna and ethical idealism instils reverence rather than love. It exalts will at the expense of feeling and presents a truncated view of philosophy. Its ideal of a theocracy, in which the good or the sātvikas are saved and the wicked who are tāmasic are hurled into hell, may satisfy theistic rigour, but not the Visistādvaitic doctrine of universal redemption. Aesthetic philosophy, on the other hand, insists on the primacy of feeling, and transforms the nivantā into the bhuvana sundara, the supremely Beautiful, whose transcendent beauty shines as the inner beauty of the self with a view to ravish it out of its fleshly feeling. The Lord with His unsurpassed and enchanting beauty is also the blissful, and, when the self is beautified, it sheds its egoistic self-satisfaction and forgets itself in the bliss of Brahman or Brahma rasa. But aesthetics by itself has a tendency to encourage sentimentalism, which is fatal to philosophic disinterestedness and discipline, and has to be coordinated with ethics and metaphysics.

Visisṭādvaita as a true philosophy of religion corrects the one-sidedness of metaphysics, ethics and aesthetics and coordinates them into a synthetic unity. Mere intellectualism, voluntarism or emotionalism is but a fragment of philosophy and it is only by the thinking together of all the sides of experience that philosophy can be reconstructed and

regarded as a synoptic view. Visistādvaita satisfies this supreme test of comprehensiveness by gathering together the concepts employed by metaphysics, morals and aesthetics and discovering the fundamental truth that underlies them. Brahman, the subject of Vedāntic enquiry, is also, according to Visistādvaita, the goal of the spiritual quest. Brahmajijnāsa and the apprehension of Brahman are followed by the attainment of the eternal values of the experience of beauty, goodness and truth and their conservation in the divine content. The philosopher who thinks God's thoughts after Him sums up the ultimate values of life in terms of cognition, conation and feeling and these are not merely subjective experiences, but are objective factors that constitute the determining qualities of Brahman itself. They are appreciated as divine qualities revealing the character of God. Visistādvaitic metaphysics, as an intellectual quest, defines Brahman as satyam, jñānam and anantam; its ethics is based on the idea of amalatva and its aesthetics, on ānanda. These five qualities may be grouped under the ideas of Brahman as ādhāra, niyansā s'esī and sundara. The finite is rooted in the infinite, is sustained and controlled by it and exists for its satisfaction. Brahman is the metaphysical ground of the world of cit and acit, the inner ruler of the finite self and the goal of life. The key thought of Visistādvaita which reveals this inner relation between Brahman and the world of acit and cit is known as s'arīrasarīri bhāva. It is regarded as the differentia of the whole system (its pradhāna pratitantra). Vedānta is for this reason known as the S'arīraka S'astra. It is this central idea that serves as the fulcrum of the philosophy of Rāmānuja, and it alone satisfies all the pramanas. It solves the riddles of thought and dispels the ills of life. It alone is philosophically

satisfactory as it fulfils the claims of the samanvaya method. It is spiritually satisfying as it alone harmonises the apparent discords of the scriptural texts. The supreme test of a philosophy lies in its simplicity and suggestiveness and the idea of Brahman as sarva-sarīrin, the Self whose body is the universe, eminently conforms to this acid test. An attempt is made in this chapter to sum up the arguments developed in the four preceding chapters dealing with the three concepts of ādheya, vidheya and seṣa and present them as distinguishable features of the term sarīra in order to define the exact meaning and value of the relation between the sarīra and the sarīrin.

The concept of Brahman as the sarīrin and the world as the sarīra strikes the keynote of the ontology of Rāmānuja as revealed in the Sadvidyā and developed by the satkāryavāda which is often wrongly identified with western realism. The Sadvidvā states the classical truth of Vedānta that Brahman is real Reality by knowing which everything else is known. Brahman is self-proved and it can be known because it is real. It is not true to say that it is real because it can be known. It is not only self-revelatory but is also the Inner Self of all beings. It enters into the world of acit along with the finite selves and evolves the names and forms that constitute the world of space-time. The universe is rooted in the True and rests in the True, and knowledge is not a passage from falsity to reality but from reality to more and more reality. Because Brahman is real, the world, which is not different from it as it is its effect or upādeya, is also real and shares its constraining character; this view is entirely different from pan-illusionism and acosmism which affirm the reality and self-identity of Brahman by denying the reality of the world order. There is a world of difference between the

Visistādvaitic affirmation that the finite is real because it is rooted in the infinite and pulsates with its life and the Advaitic negation that the finite is a fictitious imagining of the absolute due to the distorting and pluralising power of avidyā. If Brahman is mere indeterminate consciousness (nirvisesa cinmātra) and the world is a baseless fabrication of māvā, then Īsvara, the first figment of cosmic nescience or avidyā, is unreal; the jīva, the reflection of the absolute in avidyā, is unreal; every social relation is a magic show; s'āstraic omniscience is only the product of nescience on a cosmic scale; and metaphysics itself is a mere make-believe. The only way of avoiding this scepticism and nihilism is the acceptance of the theory of the divine nature of reality and of the immanence of Brahman, without the pan-cosmic identification of the cosmos with God. Vāsudeva is the All-Self that pervades the universe as paramākāsa without being affected by its imperfections. The sat or the absolute in the pralaya state contains the real possibility of cit and acit in posse, but without any distinction or differentiation; and systi is the self-differentiation of the absolute in which the possible becomes the actual. The One without a second wills to be the many and differentiates itself into the pluralistic universe; this selfdifferentiation is not an act of self-deception or false predication but the process of self-revelation. Brahman enters into the world of matter with the jīva as its sarīra, vivifies it and evolves the heterogeneous world of space-time. Brahman with cit-acit as its sarira in the undifferentiated (avibhakta) state becomes Brahman with cit-acit as the sarira in the effect state of differentiation (vibhakta). Since the effect is cause in another form and non-different from it, by knowing Brahman or natura naturans, the world order as natura naturata is likewise known. The world is false only if it is viewed as separate from Brahman. This view repudiates the asatkārvavāda of the Vaisesika which regards the effect or kārva as asat or non-existent before it is produced and explains the world as creation out of nothing; the monistic theory which affirms the reality of Brahman and the unreality of the causal relation, the Mādhyamika contention that both cause and effect are unreal; and also the satkaryavada of the Sānkhya which traces the reality of the world order to pradhāna. On the Visistādvaita view prakrti is real, though, as asat, it is liable to change in the process of parinama, and the atman is sat as it can shine by itself though its jñana! subject to the imperfections of karma. No fact of experience is an illusion, and even illusion itself as a psychic occurrence is a fact of experience. Even dreams are moral experiences though they have only a subjective and transient value. Thus every experience has Reality as its subject and is therefore real. The ultimate Reality is Brahman which pervades all beings as the Paramātman. The universe is big with Brahman or instinct with divinity though only a Prahlada with the eye of Brahman can discover it.

The ontological realism of Rāmānuja enables him to utilise the grammatical rule of sāmānādhikaraṇya in the further exposition of the sarīra-sarīri relation between the world and Brahman. It conveys the idea of one thing being equally qualified by several attributes each of which has its own distinctive meaning and motive and embodies the unity of difference. If the import of a proposition were bare unity of its the terms, it would be meaningless. Every proposition, secular or Vedic, predicates a quality or qualities of a subject in reality and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., I. i. also I. i. 13, p. 181. (Vide, p. 38)

is therefore significant. The meaning is gathered by reference to the context, convention and relevance. Every term as such has meaning only when it is functionally related to other terms in living language, and language is itself a system of meanings due to the operative identity that pervades differences. The ultimate subject of language which ensouls it is Brahman itself. In the term 'blue lotus', the adjective qualifies the noun and there is no discrepancy between the two words just as there is no contradiction between a man and his ear-ring or between the yellow colour of the orange and its sweet taste. The proposition 'This is that Devadatta' reveals the primary meaning of his personal identity and states that Devadatta in this spatial and temporal environment and context is the same Devadatta that was referred to in a former context. The two words 'thou' and 'that' in the text 'Thou art that' have their specific and direct meaning (mukhyavrtti) and connote different attributes of the same reality. To say that the text means absolute identity by the elimination of spatial and temporal differences is meaningless tautology. To say that the text 'Thou art that' affirms the identity of the jīva and Īsvara by eliminating their self-contradictions has no meaning in philosophy. nor has it any religious value. While co-ordination enriches the meaning, sublation destroys it. But the Visistādvaitic interpretation of sāmānādhikaraņya frees it from the pitfalls of monism, pluralism and bhedābheda. The monistic view that it refers to unity devoid of difference is as unthinkable as the pluralistic view that several terms have several meanings which cannot be unified. The bhedābheda theory that identity and difference are both aspects of reality is self-contradictory. The true meaning of sāmānādhikaranya is that the same thing can be qualified by several attributes, each of which has its own meaning and content. They can co-exist in peace side by side

in the same thing without suffering from self-contradiction and seeking self-extinction. This truth is eminently applicable to the Vedāntic knowledge of the relation between Brahman and the world in terms of sarīrin and sarīra. The determining qualities of Brahman like satyam, jñānam, and anantam bring to light its infinite perfections and it is idle to say that such predication is a perversion of reality. If Brahman were identified with itself there would be no point or purpose in enquiring into its nature, as such enquiry would itself be self-discrepant and suicidal. The cosmological truth that Brahman as upādāna kāraņa is also Brahman as upādeya falls into line with the law of co-ordination and there is no self-discrepancy between the two states, just as there is no self-discrepancy between the childhood of a person and his youth. The pantheistic affirmation that the world is He, brings out the all-pervasive nature of Brahman as the inner self or sarīrin of all beings. Lastly the text 'Thou art that' refers directly to co-ordination and non-contradiction as it reveals the self-identity of Brahman existing in the objective and subjective forms. It states the truth that the cosmic self connoted by 'That' is the same as the inner self or sarīrin of the jīva connected with the body connoted by the term 'Thou', and stresses the inner intimacy between Paramātman, the Supreme Self, and jīvātman, the individual self. There is no point in sacrificing the direct meaning and resorting to lakṣanā or indirect designation. The text in that case is torn from the context and becomes mere pretext.

The rule of sāmānādhikaraṇya as the grammar of Vedāntic thought enables us to understand the epistemological exposition that the world of matter and souls is the apṛthaksiddha viseṣana of Brahman. The problem of the

relation between guna and guni is a crucial test for deciding the rival claims of Advaita and Visistadvaita. The Advaitic view of nirguna Brahman as nirvisesa cinmatra or indeterminate consciousness is mainly a philosophy of negation, as its interest lies in affirming the reality of saguna Brahman as a religious necessity with a view to demolishing it dialectically by subsequent iñana and declaring its philosophic futility. But Visistādvaita is an 'yes' philosophy as it affirms everything and denies nothing, owing to its insistence on the self-revelation of Brahman in the universe as its allsustaining soul. Determination is not negation, as negation itself is determination and has positive meaning. That the sat in the Sadvidyā is savisesa and not nirvisesa is proved by the fact of creation as the self-differentiation of the absolute, by its consistency with the grammatical rule of co-ordination and the requirements of the pramanas and by its coherence with the Mīmāmsā rule of the unity of the beginning and the end of a topic. What is called nirguna Brahman in philosophic thought is itself saguna, as pure consciousness emptied of content is the hypostatisation of an abstraction. 'To be intelligent' means 'to have the quality of intelligence' as there can be no visesana without a visesya. The absolute as contentless consciousness approximates to the unconscious. The judgment 'The lotus is blue' refers to the substance or visista, namely, the lotus, having the quality or visesana of blueness and the predication of an ideal content to a subject in reality. Reality or visista is the organic unity of the visesana-visesya relation and the two are distinguishable but not divisible. The unity of Brahman and the world as visesya and visesana is visista aikya and not svarūpa aikya. The Buddhistic view of quality without substance is countered by the monistic view of substance without qualities and these

extremes find their reconciliation in the Visistādvaitic theory of the world as the visesana of Brahman. In the judgment 'He is a dandin or staff-bearer,' the predicate 'holding the staff' is what is called 'separable accidens' as the staff can exist by itself apart from the staff-bearer; but in the judgment 'Man is rational,' the quality is the differentia of the subject. As the attribute cannot be apprehended apart from the subject, of which it is the distinguishing attribute, it is called its abrthaksiddha visesana. The genus or jāti is vitally related to the individual or vyakti and the guna or quality is embodied in the guni, its subject. Terms denoting jāti and guna denote also vyakti and guni according to the rule of co-ordination. "Whenever a thing (whether species, or quality, or substance) has existence as a mode only-owing to its proof, existence and conception being inseparably connected with something elsethe words denoting it enter into co-ordination with other words denoting the same substance as characterised by other attributes."1

The reals that constitute the world are not unrelated or isolated bits, but are inter-related and related to the whole of reality. Every judgment, scriptural or secular, is an attribute of Brahman which is the ultimate Reality. The jīva is related to Brahman as its apṛthaksiddha viseṣaṇa like the light of a luminous body, the fragrance of a flower and the body of the self. The distinguishing self-consciousness (dharmabhūtajñāna) is different from the self or dharmi distinguished by it and yet the two are non-different in the sense that the essential attribute of a subject cannot exist apart from the subject. The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 228.

non-sentient world is likewise an amsa or attribute of Brahman as it cannot be apprehended apart from Brahman. Brahman is thus the viseṣya and matter and self are the viseṣana, and the viseṣya is nirvikāra and is not affected by the imperfections of the viseṣana.

The iva is a brakara of Brahman which is therefore called the brakarin. In the judgment 'this is such' the predicate 'such' is inseparably related to the 'this' which is given, finds its accomplishment in it, and is therefore called its nivamena brakāra. One thing is called the brakara of another if it cannot subsist by itself without its substrate or sustaining life and final cause or bravoiana. Like *iāti* and *guna*, a *dravva* or substance may be regarded as the determining attribute of another in so far as it is its mode.<sup>2</sup> The body is the mode of the embodied self and a word connoting a mode has its functioning and fruition in the self of which it is the mode and therefore connotes the self. The body of a deva. man or animal is the mode of the self which sustains it and uses it for its own satisfaction. Words connoting these physical bodies of the *iīvas* connote also the *iīvas* to which the bodies belong.3 Likewise words connoting brakrti and burusa also connote Paramātman or the Highest Self of which they are the brakaras.4 The body is a mode of the self and the self is a mode of the Highest Self.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., I. i. 13 p. 187 & S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. B., I. i. i. p. 97 & S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 135.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> sarīrasya sarīrinām prati prakāratvāt prakāravācinām ca s'abdānām prakāriņyeva paryavasānāt s'arīravācinām s'abdānām s'arīrīparyavasānam nyāyyam.—S. B., I. i. 13. p. 187.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> prakṛtipuruṣavācinas' s'abdāḥ tatprakāravis'iṣṭatayā avasthite paramātmani mukhyatayā vartante, jīvātmavāci devamanuṣyādi s'abdavat.—*Vedārtha Sangraha* (Vasudevachariar's edition), p. 205.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> S.B., I. i. i. p. 99 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 138.

Thus all sentient and non-sentient beings are the self-differentiations or modes of the absolute, as they are derived from it and depend on it for their form and function. Brahman, with its energising creative will, enters into the aggregate of matter, with the finite self as its s'arīra, and as their informing spirit, becomes sat and tyat or self and material things and thus evolves the heterogeneity of names and forms which make up the universe.\(^1\) All words therefore ultimately refer to the Paramātman with its modal modification of cit and acit. On the principle of co-ordination, it follows that the Self or prakārin is one though the prakāras or cit and acit are many. That the self is their substrate and supreme end is well brought out by the Vākyakāra as well.

Visistādvaita is, however, not to be misconstrued as the adjectival theory of the absolute, as it resembles it only in non-essentials. The finite self has not only an adjectival, but also a substantive, mode of being. Matter and self are the adjectives of the absolute only in the sense that the attribute cannot be known apart from its substance or subject. The self has substantive being in the sense that it is different from the absolute, as it is itself a centre of experience. If it is mere viseṣaṇa, the world of souls would be a sum of adjectives housed in the absolute. But an infinity of universals cannot constitute the universe with its infinite wealth of individual experience. Brahman is the viseṣṇa or prakārin and the world is the viseṣaṇa or prakāra and the two are indissolubly blended as the self and its body. Brahman with

¹ seyam devataikṣata hantāham imāstisrō devatā anena jivenātmanā anupravis'ya nāmarūpe vyākaravānīti II—Ch. Up., VI. iii. 2

sõkāmayata l bahusyām prajāyeyeti l satapõtapyata l satapas taptvā l idam sarvam asrjata l yad idam kiñca l tat sṛṣṭvā l tadevānuprāvis'at l tad anupravis'ya l sacca tyaccābhavat l niruktamcāniruktamca l—*Taitt*. Anandavallī, VI.

the attributes of cit and acit in the gross state of sirsti is the same as Brahman with the attributes of cit and acit in the bralava state, owing to the principle of non-difference of cause and effect and of the unity of co-ordination. This does not mean the pantheistic identity of Brahman and the world like the unity of the snake and its coils nor the absolute that includes Isvara, cit and acit. The self as abrthaksiddha visesana has both modal dependence and monadic uniqueness. This view mediates between the pluralistic theory of self-subsistent and atomic reals and the monistic theory of the absolute as the substance that exists in and by itself without any determination. By knowing Brahman, the visesya or prakārin, every visesaņa or prakāra that constitutes the universe is known. Brahman is nirguna only in the sense that it is the abode of all blessed qualities as contrasted with the changing world and the karmaridden jīva distinguished by evil as well. The view that the world of cit-acit is the prakāra of Brahman, the prakārin, is deduced from the ultimate truth of Brahman as the sarīrin and the world as the sarīra.

The idea of Brahman as the sarīrin furnishes the key to the understanding of Vedānta and is deduced from the S'ruti, the source of spiritual knowledge, and the systematically organised Sūtras which are therefore called the S'ārīraka S'āstra or what is called the philosophy of pan-organismal monism. The scriptural texts are not divergent and self-discrepant but are dominated by the one and only aim of enabling the mumukṣu to apprehend Brahman and attain its eternal bliss. The truths of revelation are impersonal (apauruṣeya) and infallible and they can be verified by intuitive experience and thus rationally justified. The Upaniṣads

are not guesses at God nor even the inductions of individual seers or rsis, but are a body of objective spiritual truths which the rsi intuits and the philosopher renders intelligible to the discursive understanding with the aid of perceptual evidence. The Upanisads have the consistency of intuition as well as of logic, and the real, as it is in itself, is the real revealed to thought and realised in spiritual experience. The Visistādvaitic philosopher with his loyalty to truth in all its levels finds no need to strain the texts to support his position. With his genius for synthetic knowledge, he intuits the sarīra-sarīri relation as the central truth of Vedānta. By knowing Brahman as the s'arīrin of all beings, everything is known. It is the thread or sūtra that binds plurality into unity, reconciles the apparent contradictions and confusions in the scriptural texts and secular experience. It solves the riddles of reason and dispels the sorrows of samsāra. The Sadvidyā, Ch. Up., VI, brings out the inner unity between Brahman and the jīva by the similes of salt dissolved in water, honey gathered from different juices, the rivers merging into the sea, the seed and the tree, and the sap of the tree. Just as the branchesand leaves of the tree draw their sustenance from the lifeof the whole tree, the universe pulsates with the life of the All-Self. But it is the Antaryāmividyā, Ch. III, vii of the Brhadaranyakopanisad that reveals explicitly the truth of the sarīra-sarīri relation and it is extolled by Rāmānuja as the ghataka sruti that reconciles the extremes of pluralism and monism and satisfies the highest demands of life in all its aspects. The seer, Yājñavalkya, who is a Brahmavādin, tells. Gautama that he knows Brahman and defines His nature in the immortal words of the Vidvā. The section refers to Brahman as the antaryamin and amrta, the indwelling immortal self. that abides in all beings as their antaryamin and rules them from within. Definition and division complete the meaning of a term in intent and extent and in defining the essential nature of Brahman as the sarīrin, the Vidyā also makes an exhaustive division of the kinds of beings that form its s'arīra and starting from the elements that constitute the objective world of space-time, it ends with the subjective world of the jīva or vijñāna which is the subject of all knowledge. The central teaching of the whole section is enshrined in the last mantra. He, who dwells in the jīva and with the jīva, whom the jīva does not know, whose body the jīva is, and who rules it from within, He is the Self, the Inner Ruler immortal. He is unseen, unheard, unperceived, and unknown: but sees, hears, perceives, and knows, not like any of us with the help of the senses but directly without their help. There is no other seer like Him, no other hearer like Him, no other perceiver like Him, and no other knower like Him. Everything else is of evil.2 The objects of sense and the living beings are not self-existent and self-maintained but spring from Brahman, are sustained by its pulsating life and exist for its satisfaction. This mantra is, as it were, the mahāvākya of Visistādvaita in the sense that the universe has its meaning and motive only in Brahman as the Life of its life and the Lord of the lords of experience without the imperfections of the sarira.

The exact definition of the sarīra-sarīri relation may now be attempted. The knowledge of the ontology of satkāryavāḍa, of

 $<sup>^1</sup>$  yō ātmani tiṣṭhan ātmanō antarah yam ātmā na veda yasyātmā s'arīram ya ātmānam antarō yamayati sa ta ātmā antaryāmyamṛtaḥ,— $B_{\uparrow}$ .  $U_{\uparrow}$ ., III. vii. 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> adrstō drastā as'rutas' s'rōtā amatō mantā avijūātō vijūātā nānyōtōsti drasta nānyōtōsti s'rōta nānyōtōsti mantā nānyōtōsti vijūātā eşa ta ātmāntaryāmyamṛtah atōnyadārtam.— Bṛ. Up., III. vii. 23.

the grammatical rule of sāmānādhikaranya, of the epistemology of abrthaksiddha visesana and of the importance of the ghataka srutis is presupposed in the understanding of this bhāva, and the preceding sections were devoted to the exposition of these truths. Really they are interrelated and form a single theme though they were logically distinguished and studied as separate truths. The definition of this bhava also presupposes a knowledge of the logical definition of the meaning of the term sarīrin. In ordinary language the word sarīra does not, like the word 'jar', denote a thing of a definite character, but applies to beings of entirely different make like worms, insects, moths, snakes, quadrupeds and men. In the Veda, the term sarīra is classified into higher and lower types on the principle of duration. The body of Isvara. suddhasatva, time and the self, are eternal while the ephemeral s'arīra is either created for the ātman or made by karma. The created bodies of the Lord and the eternals (nityasūris) belong to the former class, while the latter are sub-divided into bodies which are both volitional and karma-made. The karma-made are further classified into the immovables like trees and shrubs and movables like devas, human beings, and animals. On the principle of division according to genesis, the beings are seed-born (udbhij-ja), sweatborn (sveda-ja), egg-born (anda-ja) and womb-born (jarāyu-ja) and there are also s'arīras not produced in this way. In the case of bodies that are injured or paralysed, there is no actual control and coordination; but the power of control is only obstructed for the time being and not destroyed. The above classification includes (1) the physical bodies that are perceived by the senses and traced to biological conditions. (2) the subtle bodies or sūkṣma s'arīras caused by karma and conserved in the moral order of the universe, (3) the gross

elements of prakrti that form the physical basis of reality according to Vedāntic cosmology as defined in the Antaryāmividyā and (4) the spiritual bodies or aprākrta s'arīras which embody the spiritual universe. Broadly speaking, the s'arīras comprise cit and acit. Brahman is essentially niravayava (without the material forms of prakrti), nirguna (free from the gunas of prakrti), and unconditioned by karma. While the ephemeral s'arīras are subject to the perishing forms of matter and the moral vicissitudes of karma, the sarīrin or atman is pure and perfect. The definition of s'arīra should include all these given elements or data and attain positiveness. clearness and comprehensiveness by avoiding the fallacies of definition like ativyābti (being too wide) and avyābti (being too narrow). The infinite is really alogical in the sense that it transcends the logical intellect. The logical definition of supersensuous Reality as the end of knowledge is therefore an attempt to make a spiritual intuition intelligible to reason and commonsense by employing the language of sense and sense-symbolism.

In arriving at a true definition of the sarīra, certain faulty definitions have to be criticised and ruled out. The definition given by the logician or Naiyāyika is that the sarīra is a particular aggregate of earth and other physical elements depending for its subsistence on vital breath with its five modifications and serving as an abode to the sense organs which mediate experiences of pleasure and pain resulting from former works by way of retribution. This is not one definition but a series of definitions which violate the essential rules of lakṣaṇā. The definition that the sarīra is a combination of different elements is too narrow as it excludes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Y. M. D., IV. 75 and S. B., II. i. 8. and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 420.

abrākrta s'arīras and the body of Bhagavān which is subhāsrava and divya-mangala vigraha or the spiritual form of Beauty. The view that the s'arīra is composed of head and trunk and limbs is too wide as it includes dolls and dancing puppets and other physical models of the body. The body is thus not a mechanical whole made by the addition of parts. In the case of the tri-coloured piece of cloth which is an example of such a whole as cited in the S'rī Bhāsya, the material cause consists of threads which are white, green and black and which form its warp and woof. It may likewise be argued as is done by Yādava that Brahman is the sat or whole which is made of Isvara, cit and acit. But the analogy is unsound, as there is no essential resemblance between the woven cloth and the universe created by Brahman. The notion of a potter-God that moulds things as an external artificer is foreign to Vedānta. In the case of the cloth, the parts are only conjoined, but the universe is vitally related to Brahman who is its inner Self. The term, 'the body of a machine, car or ship,' is only descriptive and not definitory. A better definition of the sarīra therefore would be that the life of which depends on the vital breath with its five-fold functions. This is too narrow as it would exclude plants whose vital air does not function in these five ways. The view of Brahman as the s'arīrin of the universe is sometimes called the philosophy of organism as it brings out the truth that Brahman is the life of all life. The finite self is, like the foetus in the womb, sustained by the life of the whole organism and every self like the cell in the body pulsates with the all-sustaining life of Paramātman. The cosmos is explained biologically as creative evolution as in the Purusa Sūkta, and is said to be animated by the vital impulse of Brahman as prānasya prāna or the life of life that enters into the womb of matter and reproduces its own infinite variations of life. But the idea of the sarīrin cannot be equated with the philosophy of organism or vitalism as in the organism the self is the whole, whereas in the sarīrin, the whole consists of wholes; the finite self is itself a mode or amsa and a monad or entity. The two selves, the finite and the infinite, exist like two birds on the same tree; the Self of all is in the heart of finite life.

The definition that the body is the abode of the sense organs (indrivāsraya) is also too narrow as it excludes the bodies of jīvas devoid of such sense organs, like Ahalyā after she was transformed into a bare monad, and also many parts of the bodily organism which are not sense organs. In the spiritual interpretation of the universe, sensation has more value than cell or atom but a sensationalistic view is not adequate enough to explain reality. The antahkarana or sense commune which is allied to the Kantian theory of the synthetic unity of apperceptien may be the soul of the psychophysical process. But the ātman is more than this synthetic unity and the organism which is a combination of the mind and the body, is itself the sarīra of the self or jīva and is its bodily basis. There is an allied definition of the sarīra that it is the seat of action or activity (cestāsraya), but it is too wide. If cesta means kriyā, the jar would also be a sarīra as it is the locus of krivā. Still another definition of the s'arīra that it is what causes the enjoyment of the fruit of actions (bhogāvatana) is unsatisfactory as it excludes physical existents which are affirmed by the S'ruti to be the sarīra of the antaryāmin and also aprākṛta forms assumed by the Lord by His redemptive will and by the free selves (nityasūris) none of which are the fruition of the results of karma. The definition is too wide as it would include the residence of a person which is his

place of enjoyment. Brahman is itself the upādāna kāraṇa and the upādeya, the upāya and the upeya, and the idea of egoistic hedonism has no place in the Visiṣṭādvaitic philosophy of fruition. Nature lives, moves and has its being in Brahman and is the living embodiment of His creative will. There is still another definition of sarīra, that it is created out of nothing by the fiat of the omnipotent will of God and it may be entirely destroyed by the same God as the all-destroyer. No Vedāntin accepts this view of sudden creation, and, according to Rāmānuja, cit and acit are eternal but not external to Īsvara who is the all-inclusive Infinite. The Infinite enters into the finite and evolves the names and forms of the finite and resides in them as their eternal inner Ruler without being tainted by their imperfections.

We are now in a position to understand the exact meaning of Brahman as the sarīrin and the universe as the sarīra. According to Rāmānuja¹ that is called the ātman or sarīrin which is always the container (ādhāra) and controller (niyantā) of another and which uses it for its own satisfaction (seṣi). The sarīra is so called by reason of its being in its entirety the ādheya, the niyāmya and the seṣa; it is inseparable from the sarīrin and forms its apṛthaksiddha viseṣana or prakāra. Any substance which a sentient self can completely control and support for its own purposes and which stands to the self in an entirely dependent relation is called its sarīra. All sentient and non-sentient beings together constitute the sarīra of Paramātman, for they live, move and have their being in Him and exist for His satisfaction. Owing to the entry of the Infinite into the finite as its

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Vedartha Sangraha, p. 207.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. B., II. i. 9 & S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 424.

antaryāmin and the evolution of names and forms, each term that connotes the sarīra of Paramātman connotes also Īsvara, the sarīrin. Brahman is the source and sustenance of the self and uses it for its satisfaction. While prakṛti is a fleeting flux and the empirical self is subject to the imperfections of embodiment due to karma, Brahman, the sarīrin, is pure and perfect and is unaffected by these changes and imperfections. The finite self is both sarīra and sarīrin as it ensouls its body and is ensouled by its inner Ruler. When we say one is born as a man or god, or that one is a child and then a youth, we mean that the changes due to birth and age belong to the ensouled body and not to the ātman which is eternal and immutable. In the same way when we say that Brahman is the sarīrin of the self, we refer to the inner Self as different from the karma-ridden jīva.

The interpretation of Vedāntic texts in terms of the sarīra-sarīri bhāva has the advantage of reconciling apparently contradictory texts without sacrificing their primary and natural meaning or mukhyārtha. The monistic texts like There is no plurality, which deny difference, deny not the pluralistic universe but only the pluralistic view of reality. The sarīrin or prakārin is one, but the sarīras or prakāras are many. The Antaryāmi Brāhmaṇa defines Brahman as the inner self of the cetana and the acetana. The absolutist as jñānamātravādin, who affirms the reality of pure consciousness and denies its self-consciousness and conscious nature, fails to explain the saguṇa texts like Brahman being the All-Self and the knower of all things (sarvajña, sarvavit and jñānamaya). These texts define the nature of Brahman as the cosmic ground (sarvādhāra), the inner ruler

<sup>1</sup> Vedartha Sangraha, pp. 237 to 247 and S.B.E., XLVIII, pp. 139 to 144.

(nivantā) and sarva s'esi. Brahman is and has intelligence as its essential quality and from this definition (svarūbanirūbaka dharma) follows an infinity of perfections. By denying predication, knowledge itself is denied and stultified. To affirm saguna Brahman with a view to reject it finally is neither consistent nor conciliatory and is opposed to the integrity and unity of scriptural knowledge. The texts that declare the essential distinction and differences between nonsentient matter, sentient selves and the Lord (Sv. Up. I. 6 and 10) affirm the difference between the sarīrin and the sarīra. The jīvas and prakrti are the subjects and objects of experience. and the antaryamin or the inner Self of the jiva is the supersubject. The difference between the sarīrin and the sarīra is well illustrated by the Upanisadic analogy of two birds sitting on the same tree, one of which is self-resplendent and blissful while the other tastes the sweets and bitters of life (Sv. Up., IV. 6). The jīva partakes of the nature of Isvara. and brakrti is His lower nature. Visistadvaitic cosmology declares the non-difference of cause and effect and concludes that Brahman is in its causal or effected condition according as it has for its sarīra intelligent and non-intelligent beings in the subtle or in the gross state. The text 'Brahman is the world' connotes not absolute identity or svarūpa aikya but only the unity of the two as sarīra and sarīrin, as upādāna kāraņa and upādeya, and does not contradict nirvikāratva (changelessness) or the state of the transcendental purity of Brahman. The nirguna texts do not negative determination but deny only the predication of evil and other imperfections to the sarīrin, as bare negation would lead to nihilism or sūnyavāda. Aikyavāda or the philosophy

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> B. G., VII. 4 & 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ch. Up., VI. ii. 1 & 2 and Br. Up., I. iv. 7.

of identity as contained in the texts 'Thou art that,' 'All this is Brahman,' affirms the unity of the self and its sarīra in the light of the rule of coordination without abandoning the primary meaning of the texts. The term that connotes S'vetaketu connotes also the inner self or s'arīrin of S'vetaketu as terms connoting the sarīra also connote the sarīrin, and this sarīrin is saguna Brahman.3 It brings out the truth that the inner Self or ātmā of the jīva is Brahman. 4 the ground of the universe, and not the identity of the finite and the Infinite. The finite self is identical with the infinite in connotation. though there is difference between the two in denotation. They are different existentially but they are similar in their guna. Even the Advaitin that believes in jīvanmukti or liberation during life has to accept only partial identity and the existence of an infinity of jīvas who are yet clouded by avidvā. if he is to escape the charge of solipcism and acosmism. Thus Rāmānuja concludes that all the S'akhas of the Veda and Vedānta have the unity of Brahman as their purport and purpose.

From the standpoint of philosophic thinking no less than that of revelational authority, the synoptic view of sarīra-sarīri bhāva is justified and justifiable. In a critical summary in the Vedārtha Sangraha, Rāmānuja concludes that this view is a reconciliation of the extremes of Vedāntic doctrines like the schools of abheda, bhedābheda and bheda. Abheda is established by the idea of Brahman as the unity of the sarīra-sarīri relation in which the sarīrin is the one without a second that sustains the manifold of cit and acit. The view

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ch. Up., VI. viii. 7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ch. Up., III. xiv. 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> As Dramidācārya says "Brahman is what is adored as saguna (tad guṇa kopāsanāt)—Vedartha Sangraha, p. 247.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> S, B., I. i. 1. p. 94 & S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 130.

that the prakarin is the one that exists as the many prakāras supports the truth of bhedābheda, and bheda is proved by the fact of the eternal distinction between cit, acit and Isvara in their nature and character (svarūþa and svabhāva). In summing up and estimating the philosophy of the S'ārīraka Sūtras in the first two chapters relating to ontology and cosmology, Rāmānuja reveals his synthetic insight into the soul of Vedāntic thought by his attitude to the other systems of Vedic and āsthika philosophy and the method of interpreting their inner connection. In solving the problem raised in the Mahābhārata composed by the same rsi, Vyāsa, namely, whether the Sānkhya, the Yōga, the Veda, the Pāsupata and the Pañcarātra systems have a common philosophic foundation, Rāmānuja adopts the samanvaya method by his acceptance of the essentials only (svarūþa mātra) of these schools in so far as they do not contradict the central truth of the S'ārīraka S'āstra.1 While the Sānkhyan cosmology of the twenty-five categories has its meaning in the basic idea that the twenty-five tatvas have Brahman, the twenty-sixth tatva or Truth, as their source and sustaining self, the scheme of yōga discipline has its final end in the meditation on Brahman. The Vedic insistence on the performance of karma has its consummation in the Vedāntic view of regarding work as the worship of the Supreme Self (ārādhana). It also recognises the Pāsupata variety in so far as it accepts the immanence of the antaryamin or sarīrin and its ethics. The Pancaratra as the direct revelation of Nārāyaṇa contains the essentials of of all these systems and is their very soul. Thus the S'ārīraka S'āstra as a synthetic view of Vedānta accepts whatever is

¹ s'ārirakeca sānkhyōkta tatvānām abrahmātmakatāmātram nirākrtam na svarūpam l yōga pās'upatayōs'ca is'varasya kevala nimittakāranatā \* \* \* nirākrtaḥ-na yōgasvarūpam pas'upatisvarūpam ca.—Srī Bhāṣya, II. ii. 43.

true, good and beautiful in other systems owing to its criterion of comprehensiveness which means that what is true works as opposed to the pragmatic view that what works is true. It is also to be distinguished from eclecticism which pieces together what is good in all systems without proving their vital relations. The truth of Brahman as the sarīrin of all beings is clearly intuited by the Alvars and summed up in the Tamil Veda "udalmisai uyir." Rāmānuja thus shows that the foundational truth of Brahman as the sarīrin furnishes the key to the understanding of all philosophical systems.

In the highest sense of the term, the S'rī Bhāsya concludes with the very significant note of the S'ārīraka Mīmāmsa 'sarvam samanjasam' (everything is satisfactorily explained). This includes philosophical satisfactoriness as well as spiritual satisfyingness which is traceable to the infinite suggestiveness of the synthetic insight afforded by the s'arīra-s'arīri bhāva called the differentia and raison-d-etre of Rāmānuja dars'ana. It satisfies the fundamental Upanisadic text "What is that by knowing which everything else is known?" by the solution that it is Brahman which is the s'arīrin of all beings. Brahman is saguna and the distinction between saguna and nirguna Brahman is itself saguna. The relation between Brahman and the world as sarīrin and sarīra is defined in terms of ādhāra and ādheya, niyantā and niyāmya, and s'eṣi and s'eṣa, which are only logically distinguishable and not separable. The first aspect which is the ontology of Visistādvaita, developed in Chapter IV, defines Brahman as satyam or satyasya satyam as real reality or the true of the true and the life of our life, as the subject of subjects or the super-subject, (jñānam) or jyōtiṣam jyōtis (the light of all lights) and the true infinite as the eternal of eternals. The second aspect of Brahman as

nivantā, as expounded in Chapter V, defines the Brahman of metaphysics as the *Isvara* of ethical religion who is the righteous ruler of the universe without any taint of caprice, cruelty or evil and sarva raksaka or universal redeemer. The third aspect of Brahman as sesi, the independent, which is described, in Chapter VII stresses the self-related and the self-realised nature of Brahman as contrasted with the nature of cit and acit as eternally dependent on His redemptive will or sankalpa and as existing and working for His satisfaction. The aesthetic philosophy of Visistādvaita as formulated in Chapter VIII dwells on the bewitching beauty of Brahman as bhuvana sundara and its entrancing bliss or anandamaya. These are distinguishing marks of Brahman. They are the systole and the diastole of the all-sustaining and pulsating life of Paramātman as s'arīrin which is to be intuited rather than logically defined. The cosmological explanation of Brahman as the upādāna and nimitta kāraņa, the material and efficient cause of the world. satisfies the requirements of logical immanence and ethical eminence and removes the apparent conflict between the absolute of dialectic metaphysics and the God of ethical religion. The essential qualities of Brahman described as satyam, jñānam, anantam, amalam and ānandam embody the eternal values of truth, goodness and beauty and therefore satisfy the highest demands of epistemology, ethics and aesthetics. apparent contradictions of sāstra are removed by the allconciliatory nature of the ghataka sirutis or reconciling texts and the concept of s'arīra-s'arīri satisfies the triple bramānas of revelation, reasoning and sense-perception in their integral unity. It fits in with the ontological realism of satkāryavada, the grammatical rule of sāmānādhikaranya, the logical correlations of aprthaksiddha visesana and the mimāmsā rules of interpretation. It furnishes the inspiring motive for mystic communion by insisting on the ultimacy of Brahman and the inner intimacy between Brahman and the self, and for spiritual service to all jīvas owing to the similarity of their spiritual nature and the kinship due to their one indwelling Ruler. In this way every thought, word and deed refer ultimately to the sarīrin who is the life of our life, the light of the universe and the love of our love, and everything is satisfactorily explained.

The synthetic system of s'arīra-s'arīri bhāva is thus the one universal philosophy that satisfactorily explains every aspect of existence and experience. The categories of thought do not sublate reality but exist in it as pulsations of the living intelligence of ātman as every proposition or judgment has its meaning in Brahman as the meaning of meanings. The sarīrin is the source and sustenance of all thinking beings and objects, which therefore exist as and for His satisfaction. He is the first cause of all things and their final cause and the root of life and its fruit. The world is Brahmamaya and not bhramamaya, and māyā has its meaning only in the māyin whose alluring Beauty and līlā transform the ugly self into the shining forms in S'rī Vaikuntha. He is the immanent reason of the universe and the eminent Holy beyond it. He is the ground of existence and the goal of experience. He is the summum genus and the summum bonum, the supreme ground of all and the supreme goal of life. He is the highest ideal of life in whom all the ideals of rationality, righteousness and rapture are eternally self-realised. He alone has universal validity, unsurpassed valour and absolute value. He is the supreme subject of jñāna or thought, the supreme actor in the world of will and the most blissful rasa in the realm of emotion. He is the thinker of thinkers.

the creator of creators and the rasa of rasas. Viewed from the idealistic tradition of western thought, the sarīrin is not the mindless and motionless Being of Parmeanides, nor the abstract universal of Plato. He is neither the Transcendent One of Plotinus, nor the Indeterminate substance of Spinoza. He is not the panlogical subject of Hegel nor the Ego of Fichte. From the realistic standpoint, Brahman is not the concrete universal of Aristotle nor the monad of monads of Leibnitz, nor the God of Personalism and theism. Western idealism and realism with their different variations may be acceptable to Visistādvaita in so far as they do not contradict the essentials of the sarīra-sarīri sambandha. Western philosophy will gain in clearness and distinctness by recognising the Vedāntic ideas of the moral law of causation or karma by which the self has the freedom to lapse into vice and lower life or grow into godliness, the eternity of the atman as different from its endless migrations, the immanence and eminence of Brahman and the view of the unity of nature as the environment for transforming the self into the likeness of Brahman and the truth that the philosophical knowledge of Brahman leads to the spiritual realisation of Brahman and its eternal bliss.



## CHAPTER X

## COSMOLOGY

TEDANTIC cosmology is contained in the Sadvidyā of the Chāndōgya Upaniṣad and expounded in the Ārambhana Adhikarana of the Vedanta Sūtras (II. i. 15). In the Sadvidyā, the teacher, Uddālaka, initiates the pupil, S'vetaketu, into the Vedāntic truth that Brahman is the ground of the universe, by knowing which everything is known. Deity is the beginning of the evolutionary process and its end. The non-difference between Brahman and the universe is brought out by illustrative instances drawn from ordinary experience. One and the same substance like a lump of clay or a bar of gold enters into different states in succession, and thereby assumes different configurations. The same substance, clay, enters into many states like pots and pitchers, and becomes their immanent cause or upādāna kāraņa. The one transfigures into the many, and the process subserves a practical interest. What exists as a real possibility in the subtle state becomes actualised in the gross state. It is the non-differentiated which exists without name and form that becomes differentiated. This principle explains the true meaning of cosmology, and shows the unity of the causal relation. In pralaya, Brahman exists

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm I}$ yathā sōmyaikena mṛtpiṇḍena sarvam mṛṇmayam vijīfātam syādvācārambhaṇam vikarō nāmadheyam mṛttiketyeva satyam.— $Ch.~Up.,~{\rm VI.~i.~4.}$ 

S. B., II. i. 15, p. 40 of Vol. II & S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 454.

with the modes of cit-acit in such a subtle state that the modes may be treated as practically non-existent. Brahman is then in the causal state as natura naturans. It is then the absolute, the one without any distinction or difference of name and form. In the srsti state, the one wills the many and becomes the manifold with an infinity of sentient and non-sentient beings. Brahman is in the effected state as natura naturata. Since the cause and its effect are nondifferent, the effect, namely, the cosmic order, is the same as the cause or Brahman. The Upanisads repeatedly proclaim this truth of causal immanence in different ways. Chāndōgya Upaniṣad says: "All this indeed is Brahman."1 The Brhadāranyaka says: "There is no plurality here." 2 "When the self is known, all this is known." By knowing the cause, the effect is known. By knowing Brahman, the absolute, the universe with its manifold differences is known. This cosmological unity has its completion only in the spiritual wisdom resulting in the intuition of S'vetaketu that Brahman is the cosmic ground and also his own inner Self. The Upanisadic truth "Thou art that" is a realisation that the cosmic ground is the same as the inner self of the jīva. Brahman thus moulds the universe for the making of the ātman and brahmanising it. The central principle on which the theory of the origin and development of the universe is based is familiarly known as satkāryavāda and is different from that of the atheistic Sānkhya. According to it, nothing new comes into being, nor is anything created out of nothing. The creationist objects to this view by citing the Upanisad

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> sarvam khalvidam brahma | Ch. Up., III. xiv. 1. ātmaivedam sarvam | Ch. Up., VII. xxv. 2.

² neha nānāsti kiñcana.—Bṛ. Up., IV. iv. 19 & Kath. Up., II. iv. 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> ātmani khalvare dṛṣṭe s'rute mate vijñate idam sarvam viditam l—Bṛ. Up., IV. v. 6.

that asat alone existed in the beginning.1 But his view is wrong, as another Upanisad 2 makes the meaning clear by saying that the asat is the implicit and not the nonexistent. "This was then undistinguished at first; it became distinguished by name and form." "In the true, all beings have their root; in the true, they abide and in the true they rest." 3 In bralaya the cosmos exists potentially without any distinction, but in systi, what remained enfolded becomes unfolded. It is not the emergence of something new, but the self-differentiation of the same reality. Being alone becomes, and is the cause of the becoming. The one alone becomes the many, and is the cause of the manifold. In this way, the cause is immanent in the effect and is non-different from it. Brahman with cit-acit in a state of non-differentiation becomes. Brahman with cit-acit in a state of differentiation with an infinity of distinctions in name and form. The absolute broods and becomes the many by evolving the world-body (parināmāt). The contention of the illusionist, that creation is not real, does not hold good, as there is no discrepancy in the process of self-development. The Arambhana Adhikarana combats also the Dvaitavāda of Kanāda and its atomistic and pluralistic account of the universe. Kanada's theory of samavāva as the external and eternal relation between cause

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> asad vā idam agra āsīt l tatō vai sad ajāyata l tad ātmānam svayam akuruta l tasmāt tat sukṛtam ucyata iti l—*Taitt. Up.*, Ānand. vii.

 $<sup>^2</sup>$ taddhedam tarhyavyākṛtam āsīt tan nāma rupābhyāmeva vyakriyate l $B_{\it f}.~Up$ ., I. iv. 7.

sad eva sõmyedam agra āsidekamevādvitīyam taddhaika āhurasadevedam agra āsidekam evādvitīyam tasmād asatas sajjāyata l kutastu khalu sõmyaīvam syād iti hōvāca katham asatas sajjāveteti sattveva sõmyedam agra āsīd ekam evādvitīyam l tad aikṣata bahu syām prajāyeyeti l—Ch. Up., VI. ii. 1, 2, 3.

 $<sup>^{8}</sup>$  sanmūlās somyemās sarvāh prajās sadāyatanās satpratisthah.— $Ch.\ Up.$ , VI. viii, 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> S. B., I. iv. 27, p. 405 and S. B. E., XLVIII. p. 403.

and effect is open to the charge of infinite regress. The idea that the cosmos is caused by the motion of atoms due to the adrṣṭas of the jīva does not improve the case, as the interaction between the atoms and the adrṣṭas is mechanical and unintelligible. The idea of God as an extra-cosmic designer militates against the idea of divine immanence. If the pluralistic origin were accepted, the cosmos would not be a universe. It would then be a multiverse, and there would be as many worlds as there are jīvas and adrṣṭas.

The Māyāvādin comes forward with his theory of vivarta and adhyāsa to repudiate Dvaitavāda or dualism, and affirms that the idea of causality involves self-contradiction, and that the effect is only an illusory appearance of the absolute. Brahman falsely appears as the world of nāma-rūba. According to him, Brahman is eternally self-illumined, but, owing to adhvāsa, it illusorily manifests itself as the world. If, as the Vaisesika urges, the relation between cause and effect is external, it is a manifest self-contradiction, as externality and relation cannot both be true. Besides, every cause will have its cause and so on ad infinitum. If the relation is not external, but internal, internality would lead to the identity of cause and effect. Then Brahman and the world would be identical, which is absurd. The view that Brahman is partially manifest as the world is also indefensible. Brahman is without parts, and it is therefore a fallacious argument to say that a part of Brahman changes into the world and that another part is outside it, nor can Brahman change in its entirety and become the world.\footnote{1.1} The so-called parinamic process or vikara, by which the cause becomes the effect, is really vivarta. What is is and it can

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., II. i. 26 and 27, & S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 473.

never become. Becoming is only a trick of speech, and is figurative and not a fact at all. The modification of the cause into the effect is only illusory like the phantoms of a dream. The world of nāma-rūba is super-imposed on Brahman, like the shell erroneously seen as silver, and it is due to avidva. No doubt, from the vyāvahārika or practical standpoint, the world process has phenomenal reality, and serves our practical interests. But it is an appearance only and, like dreams that are sublated in the subsequent waking state, the world phantom disappears in the absolute, when true knowledge arises. The theory of the universe as the self-manifestation of Brahman is a case of self-deception like the illusion created by the magician. Nescience veils the one and makes it the seeming many whether it is the contrary of vidvā or its contradictory. Isvara is himself said to be 'the first born of cosmic nescience' and such nescience is logically a case of subjective illusion or avidyā. Strictly speaking, the whole world of sentient and non-sentient beings is fictitiously created by the avidyā of the single soul or ekajīva and the theory of ekajīva is irrefutable. It therefore follows that I alone create all beings and sustain them by my intelligence. Thus from the higher metaphysical or esoteric standpoint, cosmology is dissolved into psychology and causality is proved to be illusory. The Adhikarana disproves the theories of samavāya and parinama, and concludes that the effect in the world process is an illusion and that Brahman, the cause, alone is real.

The Bhedābhedavādin steps in at this stage and joins issue with the illusionist. He attacks the Māyavādin on all fronts, and shows that the theory contradicts all pramāṇas, and is spiritually futile. Every Vedāntin is agreed that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kaiv, Up., I. 19, & S.B.E., XLVIII. p. 448.

the nature of Brahman as the world ground can be ascertained only by means of sastra and not by means of anumana and that the sastra nowhere favours the doctrine of māyā or avidvā. The theory is an alien graft on Vedanta and not an inner growth and the Sadvidya, on which the whole cosmological theory is based, nowhere refers to the shell-silver example or the dream analogy. Causality is nowhere condemned to be self-contradictory or illusory, but is employed as the fundamental category toexpound the origin of the universe. The terms sadeva and ārambhana bring out the fact of causality as parinama or transformation and not of illusoriness or vivarta. If. as the illusionist urges, the cause is real and the effect is false, this falsity will infect the integrity of the cause itself, and then even the Veda and the mumuksu who relies on it will be false. Bhedābhedavādins like Bhāskara. Yādava and Nimbarka, therefore, reject the illusion theory as an illusory idea, and adopt the method of satkārya vāda and Brahma parinama vada or the emanation theory. In the causal relation the cause is the abheda or non-different aspect, and the effect the bheda or difference aspect, and the relation itself is bhedabheda or identity in difference. According to Bhāskara. Brahman exists as the one without a second in pralaya; but in srstī it energises itself and emanates successively into the manifold of sentient and non-sentient beings. Brahman is saguna and has a twofold sakti or power, namely, jīva pariņāma and acetana pariņāma, by which He becomes the finite centres and objects of experience. The causal relation is not temporal or logical, as it essentially brings out the immanent unity and self-activity of God. Like the spider weaving its web, the absolute transforms itself

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., II. i. 15.

into the relative by its parināma sakti or evolving power. Brahman, the unconditioned, becomes the conditioned, and differentiates itself into the infinity of beings, each having its own form and function. The infinite finitises itself, and yet transcends the limitation of finitude. Brahman emerges into the jīva, and the jīva merges finally into Brahman. The emanation of the jīva is the downward process, and its ascent to the absolute means absorption or ekībhāva and the ecstasy resulting from it.

The other Bhedābhedavādins accept the parināma vāda of Bhāskara, but reject his spiritual monism. They insist on the eternal difference and non-difference between Brahman on the one hand and cit and acit on the other. The one is in and as the many, and is their causal explanation. According to Yadava, Brahmatva is the causal unity of the universe constituted by the threefold distincts of Isvara, the cosmic Ruler, cit, the experiencing subject, and acit, the object of experience. Just as the water of the sea turns itself into waves, foam and bubbles. Brahman manifests itself in the triadic forms. The absolute as pure being divides itself into Isvara, finite centres and material things, and being as such is present in all its parts as the sat. In pralaya these distinctions exist in a potential state, and systi is the self-differentiation of this triune unity. Parināma sakti is the creative urge at the heart of reality, and the finite self that fulgurates from Brahman is an integral element of the absolute. Bhartrprapañca holds that Brahman divides itself into the trinity of Isvara, cit and acit. They exist as the basis of reality as a unity in trinity, and owing to avidyā that belongs to the jīva, the infinite finitises itself into the avasthās of the jīva.' Nimbārka also explains the origin of

I Denf Hirivanna's namphlet on Bhartrhrahanca.

the universe as the self-actualisation of saguna Brahman. In the abheda aspect, Brahman is self-related (svatantra sadbhāva); and in the bhedābheda aspect of creation, there is distinction as well as dependence between Isvara on the one hand and cit and acit on the other. Brahman is the sakta or Almighty and owing to His immanent sakti, the world order, which is enfolded in pralaya like the coils of a snake, becomes actualised in srṣṭi. Brahman is thus immanent in the universe as its upādāna kāraṇa and transcends it as its nimitta kāraṇa. Whatever their minor differences, all the Bhedābhedavādins agree in thinking that Brahman is the cause of the universe in the sense that the two have a bhedābheda relation. Brahman is identical with the universe of cit and acit as well as different from it; and the Sadvidyā as well as the Sūtras expounds Vedāntic cosmology in terms of Brahma parināma vada.

The chronological transition from S'ankara, Bhāskara and Yādavaprākasa to Rāmānuja is also a logical transition. Bhāskara rejects S'ankara, Yādava refutes Bhāskara and Rāmānuja repudiates Yādava and the other Vedāntins and establishes the truth of Visiṣṭādvaitic cosmology. They all agree in disproving the asat kārya vāda of the Vaiseṣika and his doctrine of samavāya and in demolishing the Buddhistic theories of momentariness or kṣana bhangavāda and atheism. The theory of momentariness makes life and even the stability of the theorising activity impossible. Rāmānuja brings to light the absurdity of the whole position thus: If everything is momentary, the sentient subject has perished and the object of sensation has perished. One person cannot cognise what has been apprehended by another. All the schools of Vedānta including the exoteric

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. ii. 17 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 501.

side of Advaita accept the truth that there is uniformity in nature and that every new systi is a repetition of the past and that srsti and bralaya are a cyclic process whose origin is not logically accountable. The Advaitic theory of Māyāvāda is attacked by all the other Vedāntins on the ground that its intention is Buddhistic though the motive may be Vedantic. The Advaitin relies on the principle of non-contradiction and sublation to prove his thesis that Brahman, the cause or ground. is identical with itself, and the world, the effect, as such, is illusory and non-existent. On the principles of sublation or abaccheda it follows that what cannot be subsequently sublated is alone real and that nirguna Brahman alone is the sat without a second which defies sublation. Rāmānuja sees no reason why the argument should not be extended further up to universal void. The only reality is thus the universal void because it alone cannot be subsequently sublated as no negative movement can go beyond the void. Pan-illusionism may thus lapse into pure nothingness by negating negation. To avoid this cul de sac, the Māyāvādin has to retrace his steps, abandon the idea of Isvara as the arch-illusionist, who somehow takes to self-deception, and follow the way of saguna Brahman as the self-revealing and self-communicating ātman, that enters into life with a view to enrich it and not stultify or impoverish its content. The Bhedābhedavādin has no doubt corrected the subjectivism and pan-illusionism of Māyāvāda, but is guilty of attributing the imperfections of life to Brahman. If, as Bhaskara says, the infinite is finitised by real limiting adjuncts or satyopādhis and becomes the jīva. it may become the victim of karma and of the hazards of samsāra. The Yādava theory is equally wild and mischievous, as it leads to shallow optimism. If being is present in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. i. 35 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 479.

all its parts, then reality is as fully present and perfect in dust as in the deity. The absolute will be richer for every discord, error and evil. *Isvara* as less than the absolute is then not worthy of worship.

The Sadvidvā, according to Rāmānuja, brings out the non-difference in the relation between cause and effect as applied to cosmology. The creative urge expressed in the thought that the sat without a second willed to be the many is not the fall into ajñāna in which negation enters into nirguna Brahman, but is the energising, dynamic idea of selfrevelation. Being alone becomes, and becoming has its meaning only in being. The same substance enters into different states without losing its substantiality. The sat in pralaya is homogeneous without any distinction of nāma-rūþa and the same sat in srsti differentiates itself and evolves into the heterogeneity of names and forms and becomes their inner self. The one enters into the many and becomes sat, the sentient. and tyat, the non-sentient. The manifold of cit and acit is preexistent in the bralaya state, but it is so subtle that it may be practically treated as non-existent. In the condition of sirsti, the manifold as the infinity of living and non-living beings is fully evolved and made explicit. In the causal as well as the effected state the same Brahman exists with its modes implicit or explicit. Creation is therefore not out of nothing. It is only a process of the undifferentiated becoming the differentiated. Cause and effect are therefore non-different', and by knowing Brahman, the cause, the effect. namely, the universe, is also known. If Brahman alone is real and the cosmic process is false, the Vedāntic question

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. i. 15, p. 42 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 457.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 459.

"What is the one that explains the many?" would be stultified and made meaningless. The Advaitin contends that bheda is a bar to the infinity of Brahman and is therefore false. But his case is not better than that of the Dvaitavādin as, on his view also, avidyā is something different from Brahman, and, to that extent, limits its nature. Difference as well as otherness is essential to the understanding of identity.

Causality in Vedāntic cosmology is different from the Sānkhyan concept of teleology and the mechanical views of creation. The term 'cause' is not merely used in the logical sense of an invariable and essential antecedent or avastha of a phenomenon. Every cause is a 'because' and is identified with the ground. The mechanical view is to be reinterpreted teleologically, and the term then connotes immanent causality. The apt illustrations of the causal relation are not clay and its modifications or the different vital airs which arise from the one air, but the development of life from childhood to youth.1 The causal relation is analogous to that of the child and the youth. The mechanical and the teleological views receive a new orientation from the idea of biographical or spiritual development. Personality implies inner growth and the unfolding of the infinite consciousness that belongs to the jīva. Causality thus implies continuity, immanent unity and free causality. From a still higher point of view, it refers to the sat without a second as the inner Self of all living and non-living beings. They have their source and sustenance in the Self and cannot exist apart from it. The universe is rooted in Brahman and pulsates with its life. Every sentient being is sustained by its adaptation to the living intelligence of Brahman. Ultimately the term causality may

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. i. 16 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 463.

be employed in a comprehensive sense and made to include these related ideas. It refers to the parinamic modifications of brakrti, the free causality of the karma of the finite self or iva and the supra-personal identity of Brahman as the inner ground of the system of nature and the society of selves.1 Nature not only is but also becomes, and the process of nature is ever changing and is so made as to adapt itself to the spiritual progress of the jīva, and the plan or purpose of creation is the perfection of the jīva as an ams'a or part of Brahman. The cosmological problem is the threefold problem of philosophy relating to nature, self and God. It is by the will of Isvara that nature changes and the self progresses, and it is by knowing Him as the inner Self of all beings that all beings are known. Brahman is the ultimate meaning of the universe, and the philosophy of nature and that of the self have their foundations only in the Vedāntic knowledge of Brahman. Thus understood, causality is not an altar to the unknown God, but is an adequate idea, which explains the nature of Brahman as the worldground and goal.

The order of creation as set forth in the sāstra may now be considered in detail and the evolution of prakṛti may first be studied in the light of the principle of pariṇāma or transformation. Prakṛti is differently spoken of as akṣara, avidyā and māyā and is defined as the locus or substratum of the three guṇas, satva, rajas and tamas. It exists for consciousness and not in consciousness. Though prakṛti is eternal or akṣara, it is ever changing in its form and function. It is called avidyā, as it obscures and obstructs the knowledge of Brahman, and is known as māyā as it connotes the wonders of creation. In praļaya, it is matter in its static or undifferentiated state and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. i. 22 and 23 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 469.

is known as avibhakta tamas. The next stage is the first tension of differentiation or vibhakta tamas. Like the seed that swells, sprouts, becomes a sapling and grows into a mighty tree, prakrti, which is static in the primordial state, energises, begins to grow and becomes the infinite universe. Prakrti evolves into mahat with the three states of satva, rajas and tamas. Mahat changes into ahankāra with the same three states according to their predominance of a particular phase and ahankāra is called vaikārika, taijasa and bhūtādi. Ahankāra in this sense is different from conceit. From the first kind of ahankāra aided by the second originate the eleven sense organs or indrivas. They are the psychical and satvic sides of evolution. The indrivas are two-fold, namely, the cognitive sense organs or jñānendriyas and the conative sense organs or karmendriyas. The first enable the self to apprehend external objects and are classified into manas, sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. Manas is the inner sense organ or antahkarana, the sense commune which is the inner coordinating organ of sense knowledge and is the seat of memory. Manas functions as ahankāra, citta and buddhi and is the cause both of bondage and of mukti. It is called ahankara when the ātman is falsely identified with the body, citta when it desires a thing and buddhi when it discriminates between what is true and what is false. The eye is the specific sense organ that apprehends the sensation of colour or  $r\bar{u}pa$ , the ear of hearing, the nose of odour, the tongue of taste and the skin of touch. The five conative sense organs are speech, movement, grasping, excretion and generation. The indrivas are minute and are conjoined with the jīva in all its adventures of birth and death till the attainment of mukti. Even then they are not destroyed, but enter into the lives of other migrating selves. The indriyas are neither good nor evil by themselves, and they are so subtle that yogis can see even through walls and know all things. From the tāmasāhankāra called bhūtādi arise the cosmic factors of the five subtle elements or tanmātras, and the five gross elements or bhūtas are the successive evolutions of the tanmātras. The tanmātras are sound, touch, colour, sayour, and odour (s'abda, spars'a, rūba, rasa and gandha) and the five corresponding gross elements are ether (ākāsa), air (vāyu), fire (tejas), water (ab) and earth (brthivi). From ether springs air, from air fire, from fire water, and from water earth. When vayu sustains the body, it is called the vital air and is minute and is fivefold, namely, prāna, apāna, vyāna, udāna and samāna. In this way the universe is the self-differentiation in successive forms of the same acit into the twenty-four categories of prakrti, mahat, ahankāra, eleven indriyas, five tanmātras and five bhūtas. Since they all evolve from one cosmic stuff, they prove the unity and continuity of nature.

The creation of the elements and sense organs constitutes only the collective aspect or samasti which precedes the vyasti aspect. The Sadvidyā refers to the divine act of tripartition which implies quintuplication. The principle underlying this process consists in the inclusion of all the qualities in all the elements. Each of the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether, is divided into two parts and one half of each is combined with one-eighth of the remaining elements. The universe is composed of the five mixed elements and each substance is so called because of the preponderance of one or other element. It is only by such quintuplication that particular things with specific names and

Nothing in this world is single. All things by a law divine in each other's being mingle.—Shelley.

forms are created. In explaining the meaning of the Sūtra (II. iv. 17), which dwells on this topic, Rāmānuja, following the Sūtrakāra, says: "Having entered into these elements, with myself qualified by the collective soul as its body, let me differentiate names and forms, that is, let me produce gods and all the other kinds of individual beings and give them names." 1 Says the Smrti: "Separate from each other without connection, these elements were incapable of producing creatures. But having entered into mutual conjunction, the principles from mahat to individual things produced the mundane egg." The process of individuation or vyasti srsti is also due to Brahman acting through Brahma and not merely to Brahma, the aggregate of the jīvas, who is only the first born of the absolute. Brahma himself evolved out of the Brahmanda containing the fourteen worlds, and after the creation of Brahma, the remaining cosmic process dealing with the origin of the species takes place through his agency. The souls are eternal, and joined to acit they persist even in pralaya in a subtle state destitute of names and forms, and therefore incapable of being designated as something apart from Brahman. In syrsti, Brahman as the omnipotent *Isvara*, bestows on all jīvas bodies and sense organs suited to their karma and He enters into them as their inner Ruler. Entry is opposed to immanence and, strictly speaking. connotes self-differentiation. Each sarīrin or jīva has its own sarīra or kṣetra composed of prakrti, mahat, ahankāra and the five elements.3 The eleven senses are conjoined with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> imāh tejōbannarūpās tisrō devatāh anena jīvena jīvasamastivis'istena ātmanā anupravisya nāmarūpe vyākaravāni devādi vicitras'ṛṣṭitannāmadheyāni ca karavāṇi.—S.B., II. iv. 17 and S.B.E., Vol. XLVIII, p. 580.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> nānāvīryah pṛthakbhutāh tataste samhatim vinā l nās'aknuvan prajās sraṣṭum asamāgamya kṛtsnas'ah ll sametyānyönya samyögam paraspara samas'rayāh l mahadādyā vis'eṣantāhyandam utpādayanti te ll—V. P., II. i. 52-53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> B.G., XIII. 5 & 6.;

the purusa and are like gems set in a jewel. S'arīra is either immovable (sthāvara) like trees and shrubs or movable like the bodies of devas, human beings and animals (tiryah). From the genetic standpoint, the bodies may be seed-born, sweat-born, egg-born or womb-born. There may also be spontaneous generation. In this way all jīvas from the barest monad to Brahma, the highest monad, form a hierarchy according to their karma and an amoeba may develop into an amara or god just as a deva or god may be born as a crawling insect. Even Brahma, the other devas and superhuman beings have their bodies, sense organs and places of experience. It is, however, possible for a deva or a yōgin like Saubhari to reside in several bodies at the same time.

The Sūtrakāra next addresses himself to the question whether a new systi is a repetition of the past or a new creation and solves it by an appeal to S'ruti and Smrti which are the highest authority on the subject. The Veda as the very breath of Brahman is self-valid and is eternal, infallible and impersonal. It is a body of spiritual truths which are spiritually discernible; and it is in the light of the Veda which is the idea and word of God that cosmic creation proceeds. Brahma by his tapas intuits the Vedic truths of the world-order and creates the rsis or mantra-drastas who are blessed with an insight into the inner meaning of Vedic mantras and hymns which are hidden at the end of the yugas. Says the S'ruti; "By means of the Veda, Prajāpati or Brahma evolved names. and forms." Smrti derived from S'ruti also says: "In the beginning there was sent forth by the creator the eternal word of the Veda and from it there originated all creations." 1 "Hecreated from the words of the Veda the whole world of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 332.

names, works and shapes of all things." 1 S'ankara whose exposition of the Sūtras in this matter is not much different from that of Rāmānuja, says that, before the creation the Vedic words (" re-issues of an eternal edition") became manifest in the mind of the creator and then he created the things corresponding to those words.2 Plato had a faint glimpse of the truth in his theory of ideas and archetypes of things. The Vedāntin dismisses the sphota vada of the grammarian which holds that there is a supersensuous entity known as sphota which is maniifested by the letters of the word and which manifests its meaning as the object of auditory perception. This sphota is as much a fiction as the adrsta of the Naivāvika and the nivoga of the Mīmāmsaka. Owing to the eternity of the Veda as the word of God, there originate eternal species like devas and other cosmic deities. At the beginning of a new systi, Brahman manifests the Vedas in exactly the same order as they were before and entrusts to Brahma the new creation of the different classes of gods and other beings just as they were before. The Vedic words like Indra and Agni are not conventional marks of identification but denote by their own power particular species of beings.3 Indras come and go, but indratva with its class characteristics is eternal and Brahma recollecting the Vedic meaning of the class concept creates a new Indra satisfying the requirements. In this way Brahman, the absolute, with the creative urge becomes the infinity of sentient and non-sentient beings and enters into them as their inner Self. The changeless and perfect evolves the world-body of cit and acit and becomes the changing world without losing its purity and

S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 332.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sankara Bhāsya, S.B.E., Vol. XXXIV, p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> S. B., I. iii. 27.

perfection.¹ This Vedāntic view of creation has the supreme merit of positing the reality of the cosmic order and the uniformity of nature in every sṛṣṭi. Praļaya and sṛṣṭi form a regular succession of involution and evolution and bring out the rhythmic perfection of the cosmic plan. This view ensures the unity of the universe and its uniformity and stability and at the same time provides for novelty and infinite individual variations.

The cosmic order is also a moral order and, though the highest divinity is omnipotent, and by the fiat of His will can make the world the worst of all worlds. He is not capricious and cruel. It is the favourite theme of the atheist and the monist to dwell on the evils of life and cosmic injustice resulting in unmerited suffering and waste of virtue. No merciful divinity would create a world so full as ours is of evils of all kinds like poverty, ignorance, warfare, disease and death. "Why should vice triumph over virtue and life live on death?" is the cry of the bruised heart, which is as old as creation. The absolutist pities Isvara on account of His being a magnified samsārin. If the finite self suffers from the ills of finite life. the infinite self should a fortiori subject itself to the infinite evils and sufferings of all jīvas. The atheist and the antitheist relying on the verdict of pratyaksa and anumana and on pseudo-scientific evidence deny the fact of religious experience. But the Vedāntic monist, who seeks the support of sastra to prove his siddhanta is not fair to himself. when he accepts Isvara as a sastraic necessity and rejects Him by following Mādhyamika dialectics and allying himself with the free-thinker. The Sūtrakāra takes his stand on Vedic authority and denies the sceptic view that there is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., I, iv, 27 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 403.

cruelty and caprice in the divine nature. He admits the inequalities of life but traces them to the karma of the jīvas. As Parās ara puts it, "Isvara is the operative cause only in the creation of new beings; the material cause is constituted by the karma of the jīvas to be created." The activity of the jīva no doubt proceeds from the Supreme Self, which is his inner Ruler, but at the same time, His omnipotence is selflimited by His righteousness. Isvara, as the moral ruler of the world, dispenses justice according to the nature of the karma resulting from the free will of the jīva. The Lord makes the soul act having regard to its past karma, whether meritorious or non-meritorious.<sup>3</sup> Every person is primarily responsible for his conduct and it is morally unjustifiable to throw the blame on supernatural agencies or on the highest Lord. The cosmic system has a moral foundation and Isvara is Isvara only because He is righteous. The sun shines on all alike. Rain is the common cause for different kinds of vegetation and the inequalities in their growth cannot be traced to it. Likewise divine justice is the same to all, and it reigns supreme in the kingdom of moral experience.

A new objection may be raised that the idea of a divine purpose contained in the *Upaniṣad* "It willed 'Let me become many' ' is self-contradictory and argues imperfection in *Isvara*. The word purpose refers to an end that is not yet attained, and therefore it affects the perfection of Brahman.

vaişamya nairghrnye na sapekşatvat tatha hi dars'ayati.—S. S., II, i. 34.

<sup>\*</sup> nimittamātramevāsau srjyānām sargakarmaņi | pradhānakāranībhūtaḥ yatōvai srjyas'aktayaḥ || nimittamātram muktvaiva nānyatkiñcidapekṣate | nīyate tapatām s'reṣṭa svas'aktya vastu vastutām || -V.P., I. iv. 51, 52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> S.B., II. ii. 3 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 488.

⁴ tad aikṣata bahu syām.—Ch. Up., VI. ii. 3.

But this criticism is controverted by the fact that the will of Isvara is different from the will of the jīva just as the constellation bearing the name of the dog differs from the canine species. The wishes of the divine Self are eternally fulfilled, and every purpose is immediately fulfilled. As the Lord says in the Gītā, "There is nothing in the three worlds that remains to be done by me nor anything unattained that might be attained." 1 The motive that prompts the Lord to the creation of a world comprising all kinds of sentient and non-sentient beings depending on His volition is nothing else but sport or līlā. The Sūtrakāra therefore says that what is called the creation, sustenance and destruction of the world by *Isvara* is The creation of the world is really an act of mere sport. recreation or sportive spontaneity on the part of the divine Actor or Artist. The logical and moral ideas of Brahman as the upādāna and nimitta kārana of the universe is now transfigured into the aesthetic idea of līlā. This view was fully developed in the chapter on aesthetic philosophy. There it was shown that the creative act is the purposeless purpose of the sat as the bhuvanasundara to make beauties out of nature and the self and enjoy the art of beauty. The universe is a divine comedy and it is the play of the Artist as kapata nātaka sūtradhāra that fully satisfies the sense of humour arising from the infinite becoming the finite and ends with the aesthetic joy that the finite experiences when it becomes united with the infinite.

A brief reference to the western theories of Evolution and Emergence enables us to avoid their confusions and have a clear grasp of the distinction between the happenings in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> na me pārthāsti kartavyam triṣu lōkeṣu kiñcana l nānavāptamavāptavyam varta eva ca karmaṇi ll—B. G., III. 22.

nature, the moral and spiritual conduct of the self and the inner purpose of *Isvara* as the creator, sustainer and redeemer of the universe. The evolution of matter is not an ascending movement having the promise and potency of spiritual perfection, nor is it an impediment to the creative impulse of the spirit. Matter is not a bare monad or congealed spirit just as spirit is not an offshoot of matter. The naturalistic view like the nebular theory affirms the ultimate reality of matter and explains life, consciousness and personality as the byproducts of physico-chemical changes. According to the theory of natural selection, variation and heredity, the living comes from the non-living and mind evolves from life: life is an adjustment to the environment and the fittest alone survives. in the struggle for existence. The theory makes nature hostile to morals and the world a gladiatorial show. The theories of emergence are opposed to the principle that evolution is only the unfolding of what was already implicit, but there is difference in the explanation of the source of the emergence. According to the theory of Alexander, the nature of space-time is an ultimate fact from which new qualities like life and mind emerge, and the next higher stage in the historic growth of the world is the nisus towards deity. Another theory, as held by Lloyd Morgan, accepts God as the nisus through whose activity emergents emerge and is thus less naturalistic, while Whitehead refers to a realm of eternal objects which require God as the principle of concretion for achieving actuality and thus abandons naturalism entirely. The view is further developed by distinguishing between the absolute which is infinite possibility and God as possibility actualised. The pan-logical absolutism of Hegel insists on the principle that in evolution the implicit alone becomes the explicit and that Reality is the gradual dialectic unfolding in a rhythmic

way of the One that goes out of itself and then returns toitself. Absolutism in its transcendental aspect, like that of Bradley, points to Reality as pure consciousness which somehow divides itself into finite centres and gradually becomes the world of empirical experience. Naturalism and absolutism agree in destroying the autonomy of ethical religion and explaining away the existence of the self and God as mere emergents or appearances. But a true theory of cosmology has to recognise the reality of nature, self and God by avoiding the extremes of naturalism, personalism and singularism. Nature as prakrti or ksetra evolves into the world, but is not itself purposive. It serves the purpose of *Isvara* as a suitable medium for the perfection of the burusa. The burusa or jīva is an eternal entity distinct from brakrti and its evolution is not a mere becoming or happening, but a self-choice of infinite forms of life as god, man or animal till it discovers or recovers itself. *Isvara* is distinct from both and is the immanent ground of the evolutionary process of nature and the transcendent goal of the moral progress of the jīva.

The ultimate meaning of cosmology is spiritual and mystic, and the universe may be described as a place of mukta making. The Sadvidyā is a Brahmavidyā and the Upaniṣadic motive in putting the question: "What is that ādesa" by knowing which everything else is known?" is toturn S'vetaketu the philosopher into a mumukṣu. Rāmānuja explains cosmology in terms of the sarīra-sarīri relation. Brahman in all its states has souls and matter for its body; when they are subtle, Brahman is in the causal condition, and

¹ uta tam ādes'am aprākṣyō yena as'rutam s'rutam bhavati amatam matam: avijñātam vijnātam ├─Ch. Up., VI. i. 3.

when they are in the gross state, Brahman is in the effected state and is called the world. There is no confusion in the nature of acit, cit and Brahman, as non-sentient matter is ever changing, sentient souls are liable to suffering, and Brahman is ever pure and perfect. Brahman is Nārāvana with cit and acit as His s'arīra and He created the naras and placed His seed of immortality in them. As the Lord of lords and the Creator of creators, He is free from blemish and ever blissful, and it is the essential nature of Brahman to brahmanise the self and impart His entire bliss to it. S'rsti is the evolution of the cosmic purpose and pralaya is the involution and reversal of the whole process, and the two alternate like the waking and sleep states of the jīva. S'rsti provides an environment for the evolving self to grow into godliness and bralava is the withdrawal of the instruments of activity when the Lord finds that the self chooses the way of darkness and sin, and there is moral corruption and spiritual death in the world. In this way, the process is repeated till the jīva realises the folly of its self-alienation, and returns to its home in the absolute. The freed self withdraws itself for ever from the twenty-four tatvas of prakrti in the same way in which it entered into them and became practically a mode of matter. Being Brahman He becomes Brahman. When the seer sees the brilliant Self he shakes off avidyā-karma, realises his self as the prakāra or sarīra of Brahman and becomes a mukta. Svetaketu is thus made to realise that the sat without a second which differentiates into the universe as its sarīrin is identical with the Self that is the sarīrin of his own spiritual nature. The 'that' or the sat is the Self of S'vetaketu, and it is to the immortal glory of the Upanisads that they declare the identity of Brahman as the cosmological subject with the inner atman of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> brahmaīva san brahmāpyeti.

individual self and thus reveal the mystic unity between *Paramātman* and the *jīvātman* as summed up in the *Sūtra*: "in non-division or *avibhāga*." Says the *Gītā*: "At the end of many births in the universe, the wise man reaches me, saying 'All is Vāsudeva.'"

The full religious value of meditating on Brahman as the cosmic Highest is brought out in the tenth book of the Bhāgavata and the fifth chapter of the Rahasyatraya Sāra of Vedānta Desika. The former extols Brahman as satyātmaka, satyasya satya and trisatya. That He is the soul and saviour of the universe with cit-acit as His sarīra is expressed by Vedānta Desika in his literal and symbolic description of the formless Form. In that beatific Form the jīva is the jewel Kaustubha, mūlaprakṛti is S'rīvatsa and the five weapons for preserving righteousness are mahat, ahankāra, and the indriyas. The idea of the jīva abiding in the heart of Reality as Redeemer furnishes the raison-de-etre for universal salvation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> avibhāgena dṛṣṭatvāt.—S. S., IV. iv. 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> bahünām janmanām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate l vāsudevassarvamiti sa mahātmā sudurlabhah ll—B. G., VII. 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> satyavratam satyaparam trisatyam satyasya yönim nihitañca satye! satyasya satyam rtasatyanetram satyātmakam tvām s'aranam prapannāh! —Bhāgavata, X. i. 27 and Rahasyatraya Sāra (Narasimhāchariar's edition, p. 238).

## CHAPTER XI

## THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE JĪVA

THE metaphysical knowledge of Brahman as the sole reality or tatva is followed by an enquiry into the hita or upāya which is the means of attaining Him. But a knowledge of the spiritual self or ātman is essential to practical Vedāntic culture, and the psychological study of the ātman has therefore a unique value and meaning in determining the nature of such culture. Vedāntic psychology is not an empirical science that follows the method of mere perceptual and conceptual knowledge, but is founded on metaphysical and metapsychical analysis which relies more on the introspective, than on the genetic, method to find out the essential nature of selfhood. The nature of the atman is discovered by yōgic intuition and not by the method of behaviourism, psycho-analysis or ideational construction. The self is sui generis and perseveres in its own selfhood, though materialism makes it a mode of matter and absolutism depersonalises it and makes it phenomenal and fictitious. Philosophy, western as well as eastern, has not fully recognised the eternity of the self and its intrinsic moral and spiritual worth. Visistādvaitic psychology is founded on the authority of the Ubanisads, the Sūtras and the Gītā and the inner experience, ātmānubhava or experience of the self. The western

terms, 'spirit' and 'soul', have no definite meaning and are often conceived in an animistic and anthropomorphic sense. The physical object is often invested with life and spirit, personified and endowed with human feelings and strivings. Even the term 'self', though metaphysically more adequate than the terms 'spirit' and 'soul', does not bring out the primacy of what is called the ātman as contrasted with religious consciousness and the ontology of the Paramatman. The Vedantic term "ātman" as expounded in the Sūtras and in the first six chapters of the Gītā is therefore to be preferred to the terms 'spirit,' 'soul' and 'self,' in Visistādvaitic nomenclature. The nature of the atman will be determined first dialectically by examining certain faulty definitions. The meaning of its dharmabhūta-jñāna along with the three functions of cognition, conation and feeling and the abnormal and supranormal states of consciousness will then be considered in the light of Vedantic thought aided by the method of psychology.

The concept of ātman is more easily explained by what it is not than by what it is and by a criticism of the negative definitions, the positive meaning may be reconstructed. The Dehātmavādin or materialist who holds that the body is the self, or the physical philosopher, with his aversion for metaphysics, insists on the priority and potency of matter and explains away the self as an epiphenomenon and superfluity. To use the Cārvāka's well-known analogy, like the red colour produced by the mixture of the betel leaf, arecanut and lime, the combination of the five elements creates the self. The self is said to be a fortuitous concourse of atoms. The brain secretes consciousness in the same way as the liver secretes bile. The materialist establishes the physical basis of the self by the positive test that the self lives when the

four-elemental body lives and by the negative test that, when the body disintegrates and dies, the self also dies. He thus denies the pre-natal existence of the self and its survival after death. The naturalist, as a refined materialist, explains the higher by the lower, by tracing the self to sensation, sensation to cellular activity and cellular activity to physico-chemical changes. Personality is a product of evolution by natural selection. Materialism has a seductive charm owing to its epicurean appeal. But the concept of the self is central to psychic unity. The self is a vera causa and not a mereassemblage of atoms and physical changes. It has its own primacy and purposiveness which cannot be accounted for by the category of pradhana, and no material thing is known to think and to seek for mukti or liberation. The mechanistic concept of the self is exploded by the biological category of life. The Prānātmavādin contends that the soul is prāna (vital breath). In the presence of prana, the self is present, and in its absence it is dissolved. Vitalism allied to Pranaism holds that life is an inner activity that has the character of self-maintenance and self-multiplication. It is therefore preferable to the mechanical view. While matter repeats itself, life is spontaneous and creative. But the theory that it is an entelechy or non-mechanical agency midway between matter and mind is a hypothesis that cannot be verified. The Indrivatmavadin, who holds that the senses form the self, and the sensationalist maintain that the self is constituted by the indrivas, on the basis of perceptual evidence, which, according to them, is the only test of truth; it is the cognitive and conative sense organs that cause sensations and the self is only a cluster of these sensations. Even in introspection, when we seek for the self, we stumble on a particular perception. But the self

has a synthetic unity and configuration which sensationalist psychology cannot explain. Each sense organ has its specific function; the eye cannot hear and the ear cannot see, and the unity of the experiencing self cannot be attributed to the manifold given in sense-knowledge. If knowledge is to be considered as only of external origin, the psychic experience of dreams would remain unexplained. The term deha or body includes the subtle and the gross elements of brakrti, and the self survives after death, because the linga sarīra or subtle body is not dissolved with the dissolution of the gross body. The Sūksmadehātmavādin, therefore, maintains that the self is not merely the gross body but includes also the potential body. But the dehi or embodied self is different from its embodiment, both in its potential and in its actual condition. The mentalist or the Antahkaranavādin goes a step further and argues that, without the a priori synthetic unity of the mind or antahkarana, psychic experience would lose ground and become chaotic. Unity is implied in experience and does not evolve from it. Atomistic psychology explains the mind as an aggregation of isolated sensations in terms of the laws of association and starts with the manifold of sense, but fails to reduce it to unity or give it a meaning. Psycho-analysis is. on the other hand, a deeper study of consciousness as it lays bare its different levels, explores the interior of the mind and traces consciousness from the unconscious states. The normal and the sub-normal are related, and, in dreams, the subconative tendencies and repressed desires come to the surface and are fulfilled. But the account given by the psycho-analysts, of moral and religious life in terms of repressed sex and the Oedipus complex fails to recognise the inner dignity of life. Psycho-analysts trace moral worth to morbid conditions. Metapsychics is a more critical enquiry into consciousness, as it

includes a study of its abnormal and also supra-normal states. In the background of consciousness are embedded the subconscious and the super-conscious, and vogic psychology works out scientifically the infinite possibility of consciousness and the supermind. But even this unfolding of the mental life relates only to the attributive consciousness of the jīva and not to the jīva itself. Psychology without a psyche or self is inconceivable, like playing Hamlet without the prince of Denmark. Buddhistic psychology, likewise, describes the mental process and denies the existence of an enduring self. Consciousness arisesaccording to Buddhism, by way of cause and effect and is an unbroken flux like the flow of a river. No person can step twice into the same river as fresh waters are ever flowing past him. The self is only a sanghata or aggregation and it is an ever-fleeting flux without any substantiality or causal power. Mental activity is a psycho-physical process and is a continual phenomenal happening without any static being as the substratum. The so-called self is a series made of the five aggregates or skandas consisting of the body, consciousness, perception, feeling and will. In the light of the law of becoming by cause and effect, the past flows into the present and conditions the future without any intermission. Re-birth is itself a becoming without a transmigrating entity. The transmission of light from one lamp to another is only a change of energy and does not mean transmigration from lamp to lamp. This Buddhistic psychology is untenable as its phenomenalism leads to nihilism. The self cannot be known by the cinematographic method of studying the varying and vanishing presentations. Buddhistic ethics is equally faulty as there can be no deed without a doer who is free and immortal. Finally its philosophy of no-self and nirvana is a denial not only of theodicy but also of cosmodicy, the existence of a cosmos, and leads to S'unyavada the theory of universal void. Knowledge stultifies itself, if it does not presuppose as its ground a knowing or rational self. Rationalism accepts reason as the a priori principle of knowledge. The most certain knowledge that occurs to one who philosophises in a clear and distinct way is the self-evident truth that thinking implies a thinker. As Descartes puts it 'I think, therefore I am'. The self is a thinking unextended thing distinct from the body and from the qualities derived from sense experience and is its own proof or evidence. The rationalist offers a more adequate view of the self than the empiricist but his view is not adequate enough, as it does not include the other functions of manas like citta and ahankāra. It does not define the exact nature of personality as distinct from buddhi or reason, nor does it recognise the graduated, progressive series of selves from the lowest amoeba to the highest Brahma. This spiritual evolution is not analogous to the unfolding of the monads from the bare monad of matter to the monad of monads, namely, God. The concept of the self is different from that of the material atom and of the metaphysical monad and is founded on the distinction between the cetana or the spiritual and the acetana or the material. By way of summing up, it may be concluded that the self is not deha, indriya, prāṇa, manas or buddhi though it uses all these as its instruments of expression.

The concept of the self as formulated in western thought may be determined by distinguishing its different meanings. The 'I' as the subject self is contrasted by William James with the 'me' as the object self arising from the identification of the self with all its belongings. The latter is the sum total of all that a man can call his, including his body, his clothes, his

house and the whole range of other things which are called his property. But the metaphysical 'I' is different from the empirical 'me' as it persists in its being, even after it is stripped of all its possessions. The former is selforiginated and the latter is secondary and has only an economic or market value. Spiritual experience is of the form 'I am the self and have a body' and not 'I am the body and I have the self.' The self is sometimes defined as a simple substance, as a substratum of qualities, as a thing-in-itself, or as a something we know not what. If the self is a thing-in-itself, we cannot know it and are landed in scepticism; if, to avoid this impasse, it is held that it is only a bundle of qualities, we cannot escape the charge of phenomenalism. The category of substance and qualities is a logical distinction which does not strictly apply to spiritual experience. The self as an individual is said to be an instance of the universal which pervades its individual character. The judgment of history is regarded as a half-way house between the perceptual which refers to the thing and the universal which refers to the concept. But individuality has a uniqueness which cannot be exhausted by universals. As it does not repeat a type, it eludes the grasp of science and does not admit of generalisation. On the principle of the identity of indiscernibles, no two real beings are exactly the same. The idea of wholeness fails to do justice to the integral unity of the self and its inner purposiveness. The self is not an arithmetical unit but is a metaphysical unity. The category of quality and causality is only empirically valid and has no transcendental use. The term self-consciousness presupposes selfhood and it is by reflection and introspection that self-knowledge is attained. In the subject-object relation, the object is not invariably the

material thing or non-ego opposed to the self but is also a spiritual entity admitting of inter-subjective intercourse without any loss of content. The world of space-time is given and is not a mental construction super-imposed on things. Likewise, the self as the subject of experience is in itself and is not derived from outside and does not change into another. The self is different from the material object and the two are equally real, though materialism denies the primacy of the self and personalism denies the thing or object.

The self is its own evidence and its continued existence is self-posited and not proved by metaphysical tests. It is more true to say that because I am, therefore I think, than to say that because I think, therefore I am. The self does not always think and there are deep layers of thought including the self-conscious, the unconscious, the abnormal and the supra-normal states. Its persistence in all these states is indicated by the fact of memory, recognition and spiritual self-feeling, though this unity is broken up in trances and alternations and dissociations of personality caused by drugs and psycho-physical disorders. An ethical distinction is sometimes drawn between individuality and personality. The former is 'said to refer to the irrational animal nature in man when he is drawn by inclination and the latter connotes the self-legislative character of the rational self and its freedom from servitude to matter. The first view regards the self as a thing which is a means to an end and the second, as a person who is an end unto himself, but not ego-centric. To the sociologist, the self is an element of the social organism or community. But a free society is not an organised community but a communion of free selves as persons. Each self exists in itself and also for others by shedding its

exclusiveness. From the real metaphysical standpoint, the self abides in its own being without being depersonalised by the matter of the materialist or the absolute of the monist. Its self-identity is not to be confused with bodily and psychical continuity, as the self is a spiritual entity different from the material changes of the organism or mind-body. It has uniqueness like a monad, but is not a spiritual atom, as its all-pervasive consciousness is opposed to monadic exclusiveness or windowless nature; this view is not personalistic, as personalism denies the existence of physical things. The self is not a mode of the absolute, if modal being denies the unique existence of the self. The adjectival theory of the self which defines it as adjectival to ultimate reality, as its connection of content or as an eternal differentiation of the absolute, also suffers from the defect of denying the uniqueness of the spiritual self. The monistic contention that the self betrays a fissure between the 'that' and the 'what' is equally indefensible. The concept of the self is not a vicious circle in the sense that the self is the construction of thought and that thought is a state of the self... The monist himself admits that the absolute somehow divides. itself into finite centres and that the self is not an element of the absolute but is a member thereof. Lastly, from the eschatological standpoint, the self is an entity different from the mindbody and the sensible and intelligible world and therefore the theories of interaction and parallelism and one-sided action have no value. The self is not only immortal but is also eternal and its value is never destroyed. The creationist view that the self is created out of nothing at the time of birth is as repugnant as the nihilistic view that it is annulled at the timeof the death of the body.

S.B., II. iii. 20 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 546.

The Visistādvaitic view of the ātman as a knowing subject or jñātā is clearer and more distinct than the western concepts of the self, spirit and soul and is free from animisticassociations and the difficulties arising from the problem of the relation between mind and body. By adopting Sankhyan psychology, Visistādvaita defines the self negatively asthe burusa different from the twenty-four categories of brakrti. The latter is composed of the five gross elements or bhūtas. the five subtle elements or tanmātras, the five cognitive sense organs, the five conative sense organs, manas, buddhi, ahankāra and primal prakrti. Purusa is the twenty-fifth category and is termed the higher prakrti on account of its spiritual value. The Gītā states the truth more briefly by defining the body as the ksetra or field of knowledge composed of the five gross elements with the five subtle elements, manas with the ten sense organs, ahankāra, buddhi and avyakta or the primal matter-stuff. The ātman is the kṣetrajña<sup>2</sup> or knower of the field of knowledge. The subject of experience is as different from the object as a person is different from hisdwelling place. Owing to the false identification of the self with the body, it is called the empirical self or dehi and its life is influenced by the three gunas of prakrti, namely satva, rajas and tamas. As the deha is composed of the elements of prakrti, it is also subject to decomposition and is therefore mutable or asat and perishable or vināsi, while the ātman is immutable or sat and indestructible or avināsi. This exposition has, however, no bearing on the satkarvavada. The ātman is eternal or nitya and stable or sāsvata. The six changes of the body or sadvikāras like birth, childhood and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. iii. 19 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 546.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> B. G., VII. 5 and XIII, 2 and 6.

<sup>8</sup> Kath. Up., I. ii. 18.

age are the parinamic changes of prakṛti; and the atman is never tainted by the gunas of prakrti. It is therefore nirguna. The empirical self puts on a body at birth and puts it off at death when it is worn out. Fire does not consume the ātman, water does not wet it and air does not dry it.1 It slays not another atman nor is slain by any.2 It cannot be perceived by the senses (avyakta) nor conceived of (acintya).3 The atman cannot be logically proved (aprameya) as it is the basis of proof (pramatr). It works through the means of knowledge (pramāṇa) to obtain knowledge or jñāna. The nature of the atman is thus difficult to know and therefore it arouses philosophical wonder (āscaryavat).4 What cannot be logically defined in terms of genus and differentia can be defined only in terms of experience by direct intuition or ātmānubhava as the eternal knower or subject of experience. Owing to avidyā-karma, the ātman mistakes itself for the anātman, is entangled in samsāra and migrates from body to body, from the butterfly to Brahma. But it is really changeless, pure and eternal.

The ātman is self-illuminated (svayamprakāsa) and its intelligence is both substantive and adjectival or attributive. While the ātman exists by and for itself (pratyak), its dharmabhūta-jñāna exists for another (parāk), i.e., for the ātman. The ātman is self-realised and at the same time the subject of jñāna or jñānāsraya. Selfhood is knowledge of itself, but jñāna is knowledge about the objects. The former is dharmijñāna and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> nainam chindanti s'astrāņi nainam dahati pāvakaḥ na cainam kledayanti āpō na s'oṣayati mārutaḥ.—B. G., II. 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> nāyam hanti na hanyate.—B. G., II. 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> avyaktōyam acintyōyam.—B. G., II, 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> ās'caryavatpas'yati kas'cid enam.—B. G., II. 29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Y.M.D., VIII.

the latter dharmabhūtajñana and the two are inseparable. Self-experience or atmanubhava is different from the experiences of the self as the expression of its conscious-While the jīva is infinitesimal in its monadic ness. existence, its attributive jñāna can be infinite and all-pervasive like the light of the sun 1. The self is infinitely smaller than the hundredth part of the point of a hair divided a hundred times and yet it is infinite in its range.2 The infinitesimal ātman is known to have more potentiality than the stars above. and the infinitesimal and the infinite are ultimately alike. The jīva is windowless in the sense that it perseveres in its unique being; but its consciousness is capable of having a cosmic range and can mirror the whole universe. Like light and its luminosity, the centre of a circle and its circumference, the ātman and its jñāna are logically distinguishable, but not physically separable. If consciousness were considered as a complex of qualities without the self as its subject or basis, it would lead to Buddhistic phenomenalism and nihilism, just as the theory of the self being without attributive intelligenceleads to the Vaisesika view in which the self finally lapses into the unconscious as a blank state. The ātman without jñāna would be void of content and jñāna without the ātman would be chaotic and meaningless. The two are organically related and form an illustration of the Visistādvaitic truth that, though a substance or dravya is logically defined as the locus or basis of attributes (avasthās raya), it may have a unique value in Vedānta as dravya. This value is justified by the law of relativity and perspective and the same thing may be viewed as attribute from one standpoint and as substance from another. Iñana is the determining quality of the atman; but it is also

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., II. iii. 26 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 549.

<sup>2</sup> Svet. Up., v. 9.

substantive as it is subject to the changes of contraction and expansion. It is eternal and all-pervasive; but in the empirical state of samsāra it is enveloped by avidyā-karma and undergoes contraction and expansion (sankōca and vikāsa). Jñāna is ever identical with itself though its manifestations are liable to change. It changes without losing its nature and remains the same entity. In the state of mukti, jñāna regains its essential state and is eternal and infinite. Consciousness, which is now finite and conditioned, has therefore the possibility of becoming infinite or super-mind. Owing to its unity and continuity, it is a continuous affirmation of the self. In perceptual knowledge, it is particularised and is given as a this-now. But it is not really a bit of jñāna as an isolated and exclusive state, as all conscious states are interrelated: only a section of the whole is selected or abstracted in the interests of practical life. In the higher stages of scientific and philosophic thinking, consciousness is more articulate and expansive. Consciousness is a continuum and is really cosmic. What is given in the normal waking state as a distinct thought is only a stratum or section and it is continuous with, and shades off into, what is dim in the sub-conscious and the distant in the unconscious state. Even the abnormal and the supra-normal states are but layers of the ocean of consciousness, and finally, in the state of mukti when the conditionateness of karma is destroyed, it returns to itself and shines for ever as infinite consciousness or the ocean pacific in a supersensuous and supra-rational realm.

Jñāna is the differentia or svarūpanirūpaka dharma of the jīva and is synonymous with prajñā, mati and medhā. It manifests itself in numberless ways in the subject-object relations into which it enters as well as in the subjective

life. They may all be included in the usual tripartite division of knowing, feeling and willing and this division is adequate to the empirical description of the jīva as jñātā or knower, bhoktā or enjoyer and kartā or doer. They are not isolated facts of experience, but are factors of all-inclusive consciousness. True psychology is not genetic or empirical as, according to its method of starting with reflex action and sensation and ending with reflection, the self lacks inner synthetic unity. The method has to be reversed in the light of atmanistic psychology which relies on the philosophic method of tracing the particulars as expressions of their underlying unity and discovering the whole of knowledge which is its soul. Iñana is not a mere continuum or a synthesis, but is the integral consciousness of the self and is more than its partial expressions of cognition, feeling and conation. The self is different from the knowing processes and is presupposed in the subject-object consciousness. As a knowing subject it is different from the Vaisesika view of it as substance and also from the Sānkhyan concept of the purusa. The Kānāda theory regards intelligence as an adventitious quality and the jīva in its essence as being non-intelligent like a piece of stone. The Sānkhyan theory of the burusa as an indifferent spectator is equally futile as it is a knower that knows nothing and does nothing. If the jīva is the reflection of Brahman in avidvā. it would only be a semblance of reality, and spiritual striving would then be a mere make-believe and there would be no jñāna or jñāni. Transcendental jñāna devoid of content is a transcendental illusion, and thought would become a vacuum. But the Visistādvaitic exposition of the dharmidharma relation between the ātman and its jñāna rescues knowledge from scepticism and solipsism. The denial of the guna or dharma is the denial of the gunin or dharmin itself. There

can be no quality without the substance possessing it, noexperience without an experiencing entity. As inana is invariably conjoined with manas which is its instrument of objective knowledge, it is often identified with it in a figurative way. When jñāna functions as a cognitional process, it is described as reasoning and includes the stages of scientific and philosophic knowledge. It stresses the nature of the logical ego employing the criteria of truth and the pramānas, with a view to discriminating between truth and falsity including samsaya (doubt), viparyaya (wrong opinion), bhrama (illusion), and durmati (false knowledge), by means of viveka (discrimination) and seeking srevas or final beatitude. The view that the self is merely rational, would lapse into the evils of intellectualism and this defect is removed by the ethical concept of the jīva as kartā. Consciousness is conative and every fact of knowledge is also an act of the ethical ego. Every judgment involves the factors of karma and kartā and this moral experience presupposes the primacy and freedom of the will. Self-consciousness as will is free activity or self-caused change and is not an unconscious striving or a moral process which is externally determined. The inequalities of moral life with all its hazards and hardships are entirely traceable to the responsibility of the finite self and not to prakrti or Isvara. The very term sastra implies the existence of moral freedom in worldly and Vedic conduct and the imperative of duty. If purposive activity belonged to prakrti and not to the jīva, then it would follow that, since prakrti belongs to all, all actions would be experienced by all jīvas and the uniqueness of personal experience would be destroyed.2 Matter is not known to meditate on

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. iii. 33 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 553.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. B., II. iii. 36 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 555.

itself and become desirous of liberation. If activity were determined by the divine will, the self would only be an automaton or a conduit-pipe of the cosmic purpose which would then appear capricious and cruel, and freedom of will would be an illusory fiction. The acceptance of passivity and of the fatalistic theory itself is an act of free will. Moral freedom implies deliberation, when there is a conflict of desires, and decision. In the process of deliberation the self weighs alternative possibilities and oscillates between them, then the choice is made and the motive develops into a will and becomes an overt act. In this moral situation the self does not remain an indifferent spectator watching the conflict of motives and the triumph of the strongest motive, but identifies itself with the whole process as the doer doing the deed. Freedom is a skill or capacity as well as an activity and the jīva has moral freedom even if it does not exercise it actively just as a carpenter is a workman whether he uses his tools or not.' 'Ought' implies 'can' and the moral self can attain self-sovereignty or svarājya by subduing its animal inclinations consisting of instincts like self-assertion, anger, jealousy and fear, and choosing the ways of the mumuksu including bhakti (devotion) and prapatti (selfsurrender) or sink into animality by choosing the way of sensuality and becoming its slave. It can become a god or a dog and no being on earth or beyond can destroy its consciousness of freedom and initiative. But if morals be given priority over metaphysics and aesthetics, the result may lead to the evils of moralism, ending in the ritualism of the Mimāmsaka and the rigorism of the Kantian view of morals and mere progressivism. The evils of intellectualism and voluntarism are avoided by recognising the affective side of consciousness

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. iii. 39 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 556.

or feeling as being midway between cognition and conation and describing jñāna in terms of bhōktṛtva (the capacity for experiencing). Feeling is the essence of the empirical self as bhōktā (the experient) and pleasure-pain is the stuff of feeling and is regarded as its hedonistic tone. Every state of consciousness has feeling tone, which includes organic and bodily feeling, psychic feeling and the feeling caused by the reaction of the subject to the object that is presented to it.

James Ward distinguishes five meanings of feeling, namely a touch, an organic sensation, an emotion, a purely subjective state and the pure affective state like the feeling of pleasure or pain. Of these the last is the most appropriate meaning implying a hedonistic tone. Feeling is not immediate, sentient experience which is infraintellectual, inarticulate and confused, as there is no such selfsufficient feeling in the mental complex. The faculty psychology that maps out the mind-body into separate faculties is entirely faulty and out of date as it ignores the need for a synthetic knowledge of the whole self and the whole-making functions of its jñāna. Every sensation is significant and determinate. The affective tone of the specific sensations varies with their intensity, duration and quality. Pleasurable sensations promote organic life and welfare. Emotions like fear, anger, jealousy and sexual feeling have a wider range and greater persistence than a momentary feeling, and they cannot always be abstracted from their bodily expression. An emotional disposition is said to be a feeling in the presence of an object which persists and is different from the emotional mood which is mainly subjective. When an emotion qualifies a more stable centre, it is called a sentiment, like patriotism. A spiritual intuition is not mere feeling which is precognitive

and primitive but is supra-intellectual. What is known as the gregarious instinct brings out the nature of the  $j\bar{\imath}va$  as the social self realised in its inter-subjective intercourse and spiritual communion. The highest sentiments of the social self are friendship (maitr $\bar{\imath}$ ), mercy or benevolence (day $\bar{a}$ ), bhakti (devotion to God) and prapatti (self-surrender to God). The  $\bar{a}tman$  as the material self is imprisoned in its mind-body or  $sth\bar{u}la$  (gross) and  $s\bar{u}ksma$  (subtle)  $sar\bar{\imath}ra$  and enjoys the pleasures of sense and sensibility. When its desires are rationalised by viveka, it rises to a higher level of self-feeling and enjoys the happiness of self-realisation. But when it intuits the Lord who is its inner Self, it enjoys eternal bliss.

The three states of consciousness are one continuous context and are not contradictory, and each state shades off without any gap or leap into innumerable other states which are equally real. Dharmabhūtajñāna with its possibility of becoming infinite has a unity and identity of content which runs through all its varying and vanishing presentations and is one single affirmation about the dharmi and is sustained by its intelligence. The analysis of avasthatraya or the three states is founded on the principle of the evolution and integration of consciousness and not on self-contradiction. Monistic Vedānta interprets the consciousness of difference like that involved in senseperception and the fanciful and fantastic states of the dream world, as a self-discrepancy requiring sublation. The subjectobject relation that creates the dualistic experience is essential to knowledge and does not imply any dualism between reality and thought as is said to be involved in the Advaitic analysis of avasthātraya. When the self passes from the unconscious to the conscious, the transition is from the potential to the actual and from the subtle to the gross and it does not mark any stages

of reality. Just as childhood does not contradict youth, the unconscious state does not sublate the waking consciousness. Vikāra is not vivarta and passing from one state to another does not betray any inner perversity or misunderstanding. In our waking consciousness the self is aware of the external world which satisfies the practical needs of life and is the same to all individuals. The objective world of space-time is given as the common theatre of our actions and it is not a mental construction confined to finite thought. The world in which we all live and move is neither a mere course of consciousness as a perishing psychical state nor a significant idea having objective reference, but is external to the perceiving subject. Even the Advaitin is logically constrained to accept this view and reject the subjective idealism of the Buddhist. The philosophy of the objective does not, therefore, contradict commonsense but gives a deeper and wider view of it by its comprehensive insight. Our waking consciousness in its aspects of knowledge and will is double-edged as it presupposes the logical and moral subject which is the finite self and the world of space-time and sense-life which is the object of experience. The monist reverses the commonsense view when he seeks to explain the normal psychic experience of integration in terms of the abnormal process of disintegration and confusion and traces the genesis of both to avidyā and adhyāsa. If knowledge in all its levels including omniscience is attributed to nescience, scepticism will be the only inevitable result of such pan-illusionism.

But. Visiṣṭādvaita affirms the reality of all cognitions, makes no radical distinction between the normal and the abnormal, and explains all changes of consciousness in a scientific and moral way. The self abides in its being in the

states of waking, dream and sleep including the so-called abnormal states of dissociation of personality and multiple personality and the supra-normal states of yogic intuitions, super-mind and cosmic consciousness. The difference between waking and dreaming consists in the fact that the self is awake when it contacts the external world and is in the dreaming condition if it has broken away from the objective world which is common to all beings, and experiences a succession of memory images without logical coherence and co-ordination. Psychic presentations are not fantastic fabrications woven with the images of memory but are wonderful objects created by Isvara according to individual desert.1 The prophetic character of dreams is further evidence of the divine creation of dream objects.2 As pure subjective experience, dreams are of the nature of retribution whether as reward or as punishment for minor deeds,3 and the subjective is as real as the objective. From the ethical point of view every dream is expiatory and its feeling tone is determined by the conduct of the jīva that is morally judged. According to psycho-analysts, the subconative tendencies that are suppressed come to the surface in dreams and there is wish-fulfilment. But the term 'unconscious' employed in the method of psycho-analysis is vague and its sexual version of desire is not only inexplicable but is also repugnant to the moral consciousness. The ethical and religious significance of dream-psychology is completely ignored by psycho-analysis and subjectivism. When the selfsuffers from fatigue, it seeks relaxation and retires into the condition of sleep for recuperation of energy. The sleeping self puts off the tools of thought and the instruments of action

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., III. ii. 3 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 602.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. B., III. ii. 6 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 604.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> S. B., III. ii. 5 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 603.

and refreshes itself; but even in that state, consciousness persists as a potentiality like masculinity in a male child. It is lulled to rest in the nādis (nerve-centres) of the pericardium and is united there with the True or Brahman, the real resting place of the tired self.<sup>2</sup> Sleep is the period of repose and recuperation when the spent tissues are again built up: brāna functions in sleep, when the mind and the sense organs are inactive, and maintains life. The view that waking is a realistic state and dream an idealistic creation followed often by presumed non-dual consciousness in perfect sleep is controverted by the fact that states are real avasthās and are not stages of sublation in which negation is negated. If the avidyaridden self progresses or regresses from the sheaths which make it visva, taijasa and brajñā and stultifies itself apparently in sleep and really in turīva, pure consciousness will itself be sublated by the self, and all knowledge will be shipwrecked at the entrance to the harbour of the absolute. the bliss of samādhi is allied to the bliss of sleep, no spiritual endeavour is needed to attain it as every one slides into sleep and lapses into the unconscious.3 The logical conclusion of Advaita should be the denial of mūlāvidvā (original nescience) and avasthātraya. The Advaitin, however, fights shy of the philosophy of bare negation or sūnya, into which Buddhistic logic would force him, and makes a compromise with the realist. In describing the different avasthās of the self, the Sūtras nowhere refer to their self-contradictions and the need for sublation.

All the avasthās mark the transition of jñāna from the conscious to the sub-conscious and to the unconscious which are different states of jñāna determined by karma. Drowsiness,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. iii. 31 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 551. <sup>2</sup> S. B., III. ii. 7 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 604.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ch. Up., VIII. ii. I.

waking dreams and reverie form an interim stage between waking and dreaming. While psychology explains the normal process of integration, psychiatry deals with the opposite process of mental disruption as in the phenomena of hypnotism, multiple personalities and alternation of personalities. Hypnotism, whether self-induced or caused by another, is partial quiescence and is the result of concentration when some mental processes are suspended and others heightened. Hysteria is also a case of a break in the feeling of self and its unity. In cases of dissociation and alternation of personality, memory is paralysed by drug, disease or psycho-physical disorders in the sthula and the suksma sarīras or gross and subtle bodies of the jīva. But when these counteracting causes are overcome, the unity of consciousness is restored and the self recognises its identity based on smrti or memory. Personal identity is a real psychological experience and is confirmed by the Upanisad. From the ethical standpoint of karma, moral life presupposes the freedom and eternity of the self.1 The religious consciousness insists on the preservation of the eternal values of the freed self. When the gross body is dissolved in death, the jīva goes to heaven or hell, svarga or naraka, to enjoy the fruits of its good deeds or punya or to undergo suffering, as the consequence of its evil deeds or pāpa. No jīva can escape the consequences of its karma, and the law of retribution presupposes the immortality of the jīva, the existence of Isvara as the dispenser of justice, and the unity of the universe of space-time as the field of activity and the sphere of retribution. Deeds, good as well as bad, are never lost, and the jīva that has done punya ascends after death to svarga by the way of the pitrs or the manes and enjoys the pleasures

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., III. ii. 9 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 605.

resulting from such bunva. But the pleasures of svarga are as fleeting as earthly pleasures and are besides infected by the mental depression due to servility to gods. When its bunya is exhausted by enjoyment, the jīva returns to the earth and reincarnates in a new body determined by its residual karma and begins a fresh career in the new environment. The jīva having a record of wickedness is hurled into hell, suffers from pains proportionate to its evil deeds and is reborn in the world with a fresh opportunity to undo the past. The self has thus freedom to grow into satvic goodness or lapse into tāmasic wickedness. It subjects itself to the adventure of numberless births and deaths, and is caught up in the see-saw of samsāra. While destiny drags the jīva down and subjects it to sorrow, the inner divinity in each jīva urges it to choose the way of blessedness, and it drifts between destiny and divinity till it decides on mukti and becomes a mumuksu.

The ātman and its jñāna were till now described from the standpoint of psychology as the subject of a separate sāstra, but Vedāntic psychology is really founded on its philosophy of religion and forms a half-way house in the passage from metaphysics to religion as expounded in the Vedānta Sūtras. The nature of the ātman cannot be known apart from that of the Paramātman as the two are indissolubly related as sarīra and sarīrin, amsa and amsin. This truth is explained at some length in my short work Ramanuja's Idea of the Finite Self and may be briefly summarised in this context. The jīva or finite self is a prakāra of the Paramātman as a logical, ethical

¹ tasminyāvatsampātamusitvāthaitam evādhvānam punarnivartante...tad ya iha ramaniyacaranā abhyās'o ha yatte ramaniyām yōnimāpadyeran...atha ya iha kapūyacarana abhyās'o ha yatte kapūyām yōnim-āpadyeran....—Ch. Up., V. x. 5 and 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. B., II. iii. 42 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 559.

and aesthetic ego and is finally intuited as His sarīra. Relations. are not self-discrepant, but they do relate and the logical relation between the finite and the infinite self is brought out by the categories of cause and effect, substance and attributeand whole and parts. The jīva is the effect of Brahman in the sense that a term connoting Brahman in the effected or differentiated state is co-ordinated with another connoting the same in the causal or non-differentiated state. This view leads. to the second concept of the jīva as the inseparable attributeor aprthaksiddhavisesana of sat which is the ultimate substance. The substance is the subject of qualities and thereis connection of content between the supreme self and its quality, the jīva. The visesana is not only an eternal differentiation of the absolute but also an eternal part or amsa of Brahman who is the vibhu or the whole of Reality; the iva is a spark of the brilliant Self. The jīva is not merely a mode of Brahman but is a spiritual monad, though not an atom in the quantitative sense. The idea that Brahman is one entity and that the jīva is separate is mathematical and not metaphysical, as the true infinite transcends the category of quantity. The vibhu is the virāt that is immanent in the anu or the monadic jīva as its inner Self, but it exceeds its finite content. Though monadic as a substance, the jīva has intelligence which is capable of becoming infinite. Visistādvaita thus reconciles. the discrepancy between monism and pluralism by its interpretation of the terms causality, substantiality and infinity, The jīva is the upādeya, visesaņa and amsa and Brahman is. the supreme Source, Super-Subject and the inner Self.

The ethical ego stresses the aspect of transcendence and external relation with *Isvara* in terms of sesa and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> B. G., XV. 7.

s'esi and dāsa and svāmin. While a quality is a quality -of a substance, a relation is strictly between two substances. The jīva is not a visesana, but is a self-active personality or visesa which is essentially free. Isvara is the niyantā and Purusottama, who wills the true and the good and whose conation is immediately self-realised. He is absolutely pure, perfect and holv. The jīva attains self-sovereignty by subjugating sensibility and egoism or ahankara and dedicating its freedom to the service of Isvara. The self realises its utter dependence (s'esatva) on Isvara, its inner Ruler, and its being a means to His satisfaction as the sesa. While acit also subserves the divine end of soul-making, cit is conscious of such instrumentality and is therefore called dasa. Every deed is consecrated service to Isvara, as kainkarva and the gift of self is the supreme kainkarya to the Lord who is its real Self and Redeemer. The aesthetic ego reconciles immansence and transcendence by the concept of the jiva as not only the jñātā (knower), and the kartā (doer), but also as the bhōktā (enjoyer). While the logical view promotes intimacy and unity, the ethical way fosters reverence to the Holy. The aesthetic self combines the two by intuiting Brahman as bhuvanasundara, who creates for Himself a beautiful form of His own to attract the self and transmit beauty and bliss to it. The logical, ethical and aesthetic ego are ultimately transfigured into the three-fold expression of the sarīra of Brahman in terms of ādheyatva, vidheyatva and sesatva. The term sarīrin as appplied to the atman should satisfy the three conditions of modality, dependence and serviceability. Firstly as a mode it derives its being from Brahman as the very life of its life (svarūpa ās rta) and is sustained by its immanence (ātmaika prakāratva). Secondly it is controlled by its will (sankalpāsrita) and absolutely depends on it (atmaikās rayatva). Finally the

self subsists as a means to the realisation of the divine purpose (ātmaika prayōjanatva). Thus the jīva derives its substantiality from the Brahman as the ādhāra, depends on His redemptive will as the niyantā and exists as a means to the satisfaction of the sesi. Brahman as the source, sustenance and satisfaction of the finite self is called its sarīrin. Every term connoting the sarīra connotes the sārīrin and the jīva connotes also Brahman, its sarīrin. There is a plurality of jīvas each having its own distinct character, although all jīvas are alike in so far as they have intelligence for their essential nature.

The Visistādvaitic view that the jīva or individual self is a prakāra of Brahman, the supreme Self who is its prakārin, is, on the face of it, paradoxical, because the jīva is also considered as a separate entity or centre of existence distinct from Brahman and having qualities of its own. It amounts to saying that the jīva is both a monad having an existence of its own and a mode or inseparable attribute of Brahman. Exception has been taken to this view of the relationship between the self and Brahman on the following grounds by objectors: (1) How can the same thing be both substance and attribute? (2) If the self is a mode or inseparable attribute of Brahman, how can it be at the same time a distinct centre of existence? If the self is a separate centre of experience, its relationship to Brahman would be external and this would be inconsistent with its being a mode of Brahman. (3) If a substance is different from the qualities by which only it is known, it is unknowable as a thing-in-itself. If, on the other hand, a substance is the same as its qualities, it cannot be -called a monad as there would then be no substrate or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., II. iii. 48, and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 565.

locus. (4) Again in perceptions like 'I see the rose' and more especially in self-consciousness, the self, which, according to the Visistādvaitic view, is a separate centre of consciousness, is both the experiencing subject and the experienced object. How can the conscious subject which is cit be also the object which is acit or jada? (5) If the self and its consciousness be one, how can it be maintained that its jñāna is capable of becoming infinite when its own nature is atomic? It is difficult to conceive how the changeless can change. The Visistādvaitin replies to these objections as follows: (1) That a thing can both be a substance and an attribute to another substance is not inconceivable. The lamp emits light; light is here an attribute of the lamp and at the same time it is in itself a substance. (2) The experienced object is not always acit or jada. When Devadatta perceives or infers the existence of his neighbour Somadatta, the latter, though experienced by the former, is himself a thinking or experiencing self. (3) It is only the relationship of the sarīra and sarīrin which Visistādvaita postulates between the self and Brahman, that can adequately bring out the intimacy that exists between the two, as in spiritual communion. This view has also the supreme merit of conveying the truth that the Paramātman as sarīrin enters into the jīvātman which is Its sarīra with a view to imparting substantiality and communicating Its infinite love to the jīva.

The other systems of philosophy, while trying to explain the relationship between Brahman and the self, fail to give satisfaction. The pluralist posits the existence of an infinite number of self-thinking and self-active entities persisting in their own right. This would make God a monad among many monads, or an each as a purusa among other purusas. It

reduces God to the position of a finite being. Some schools of theism define God as an extra-cosmic creator and insist on eternal distinctions between the creator and his creation. On this view God is too remote for the purpose of spiritual communion which is so essential to the religious consciousness. The Bhedābhedavādins contend that Brahman is both identical with the jīva and different from it. This would imply that Brahman is tainted with the imperfections of the self. The Advaitin concedes phenomenal reality to the finite self on the empirical plane, but maintains that it is only an illusory appearance shot through with self-contradiction and imposed on the absolute, which is sublatable ultimately by inana. He does not explain how Brahman came to be clouded by avidyā. Further, he is unable to define the nature of mukti and show why selves ridden by avidyā should continue to exist when avidyā has been destroyed by the jñāna of any one single self. Even a determined absolutist like Bradley admits that 'we do not know how or why the absolute divides itself into finite centres or the way in which, so divided, it remains as one'.

The existence of a plurality of selves is a fact of experience in all its levels though philosophy is unable to explain it. The mystic who has a soul-sight of God assures us that, in the state of communion, his separate consciousness is swallowed up and not his separate being and invites others to share his joy. The existence of a plurality of jīvas is proved by appeal to experience in all its aspects, perceptual, inferential and intuitive, and is generally affirmed by all schools of philosophy except by that of Ekajīva-vāda. It holds the view that esse is percipi and that dṛṣṭi is sṛṣṭi and that there can be only one sākṣin or seer of all things and that whatever is known as jada is false. The world of space-time-cause is only 'my' idea and is

created and sustained only by 'me' and by knowing the 'I' the 'me' including the whole known world disappears. The logic of Ekajīva-vāda is irrefutable and inescapable and all attempts made by the Advaitic idealist to avoid subjectivism are futile and have proved a failure. The theories of avidyā and māvā and their relation only prove the thesis that non-dualism cannot free itself from the charge of the dualism between māvā and avidvā. If Brahman is conjoined with māvā, it either controls māyā or is controlled by it. In either case, it creates the jīva and causes the confusions and delusions of avidyā. To say that a false creation is only a play makes matters worse, when it makes Brahman a dreamer dreaming the world and enacting a false play to delight false persons. To avoid this God-destroying and world-negating logic, other Advaitins impute nescience only to the jīva and not to Brahman which is ever pure consciousness. Brahman is ever selfeffulgent, but the jīvas are its myriad reflections due to the distortion of avidyā. The plurality of avidyā causes the plurality of jīvas and they are ever conjoined and mutually dependent and form a beginningless stream. This view does not improve the position as it makes the desire for freedom and freedom itself a make-believe. If avidyā is a stream, so is the jīva, and it is no entity. If mukti is the destruction of avidvā only, the nature of the jīva exists as distinct from Brahman, but if it is the destruction of the nature of the jīva, it is suicidal. The release of one jīva should at once result in that of all other jīvas. The whole difficulty arises out of assuming a false medium between Brahman and the jīva. The only logical way out of this impasse is to accept the view that Brahman is the locus of avidyā and is caught up in its self-contradiction. The limitation theory is more realistic than the reflection theory, as it gives some meaning to the need for, and the nature of, mukti,

and marks a transition to the *Bhedābheda* view of real limiting adjuncts or satyōpādis and not mithyōpādis. But even this explanation is not free from the charge of importing a real defect in the nature of Brahman. Rāmānuja gives a new orientation to the whole problem by giving a moral meaning to avidyā in terms of karma, imputing avidyā-karma to the jīva and recognising a plurality of jīvas and the need for moral and spiritual endeavour on the part of every jīva to attain Brahman.

## CHAPTER XII

## MUMUKŞUTVA

PSYCHOLOGICAL insight into the imperfections of the karma-ridden jīva is essential to the practice of vairāgya or self-renouncement as a preparation for Vedantic life and the Sūtrākāra therefore devotes a special section called the Vairāgya Pāda to its study. The metaphysician that enquires into the nature of ultimate reality and truth becomes on the religious level a mumukșu or spiritual seeker after Brahman. Visistādvaita as a philosophy of religion is founded on the fundamental Vedāntic truth that the knower of Brahman attains the highest (Brahmavid āpnōti param). The enquiry into Brahman (Brahmajijñāsā) is governed by the supreme spiritual end of attaining immortality (na ca punarāvartate). The knowledge of Brahman as the ground of existence obtained by employing the pramanas enables the self to determine the practical methods of attaining mukti or liberation from the hazards of birth and death. Ontology as a logical and dialectical account of reality has its completion only in teleology and value philosophy. Brahman as the ultimate tatva is spiritually realisable as the supreme purusārtha by moral and spiritual discipline which is known as the hita. The word vedanā in the Upanisad connotes not merely the philosophic apprehension of Brahman but also the spiritual attempt at realisation in which jñāna deepens into upāsana or meditation on Brahman. The attainment of God is the supreme and complete good which includes the moral and spiritual effort to realise it. Brahman is eternally self-realised and perfect, but the jīva in its empirical state forgets its divine destiny, like the prince who, forgetting his royal descent, lives as a hunter with other hunters in the woods and is providentially restored to his father's kingdom. The finite self has its source and sustenance in Brahman, but it forgets its divineness, wanders in the wilderness of samsāra, and finally regains the paradise of Paramapada. Brahmajñāna is not merely disillusionment but a spiritual ascent of the enlightened self to its home in the absolute. The supreme end of the mumuksu is thus the realisation of Brahman which is the consummation of moral discipline. Moral discipline is the process of selfpurification elaborated in Karma Yoga, and spiritual culture is the method of self-realisation prescribed in Jñāna Yōga. Bhakti Yoga is the scheme of God-realisation as the completion of the moral and spiritual disciplines. In this way the three Yogas are the triple ways of Vedantic culture leading to the knowledge of Brahman.

The ātman is essentially free and eternal, and lives, moves and has its being in the Paramātman as its inner Self. But somehow it falsely identifies itself with prakṛti, and the ātman which is a mode of Brahman imagines itself to be the mode of matter. Like attracts like and the prakṛti-ridden puruṣa acts as if it were a bodily self drawn by the objects of sense and thus becomes the slave of sensibility. The ātman as the self-conscious subject that is eternally free and blissful has Brahman as its source, centre and sustenance. But owing to the influence of avidyā-karma whose origin cannot

be temporally or logically explained, the atman forgets its home in the absolute, is enticed by prakrti and is caught up in the cycle of birth and death and pleasure and pain. Avidyā creates the confusion of dehātma-bhrama or abhimāna, due to the failure to distinguish between the self and the body. Abhimāna generates kāma or the lusts of the flesh. Kāma lapses into hatred if the desire for the objects of sense is frustrated. The effect of avidyā-karma is conserved in the mind-body as the infinite causal chain of karma containing the possibility of future births and deaths. The jīva by forgetting its divine heritage, enters into the body of every kind of living being,—human, sub-human and celestial,—is tossed up and down in the scales of evolution from the amoeba to the archangel and subjects itself to the infinite hazards and hardships of metempsychosis. Even the hedonistic satisfaction of svarga gained by the practice of vajña (sacrifice), dana (gifts) and tapas (penance) is trivial and transient (alba, asthira). The jīva ascends to svarga by its meritorious karma but is used by the devas not as a free self but as a thing, and, as a means to the gratification of their celestial desires. It is like a beast for the devas. The will of the gods to rule others is made possible because of the will to serve them that is present in the punya-ridden jīva loaded with karma. Corresponding to the pleasures of svarga are the pains of naraka or hell and both follow the law of retribution with mathematical precision.3 The monistic view that heaven and hell are mere mental experiences without a place in the objective universe is a form of subjective idealism which ignores the reality of the world of space-time and social

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., III. i. 7 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 589.

 $<sup>^{2}</sup>$  tam devah bakṣayanti yathā pas'ur evam sa devānām.—Bṛ. Up., I. iv. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> S. B., III. i. 9 and S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 591.

order and explains away the facts of cosmic life as figurative expressions. But the *Vedāntin* accepts the reality of the cosmic order and the solidarity of society in all its levels in the three-storeyed universe of the sub-human, human and celestial orders.

Self-renouncement or virakti is the first requisite of the mumuksu who seeks the infinite bliss of Brahman, and it is freedom from the desires of terrestrial and celestial pleasures. The sensualist regards the world as a carnal feast and revels in the joys of earthly paradise, without looking before and after. The sense-bound Lokavata or materialistic hedonist sings the glory of sensual life, luxuriates in ease and voluptuousness and rolls in the soft cushions of sense-born joys designed by Eros. Nothing is more pleasing than pleasure and the story of Prince Siddhartha sums up poetically the joys of a hedonistic heaven in a pleasure-palace with its softened light, sweet odours, delicious foods, with juicy fruits and soothing amorous songs, with dreamy dances and delicate ministers of love. To the seeker after the pleasures of svarga, the joys of devaloka, the world of the gods, with the shining wealth of Kubera, soft Gandharva melodies and revels in the company of Rambha and others exceed in range and variety human pleasures, as they are satisfactions without any strife or Life is, on the whole, rich and rosy and its satiety. pleasure ranges in intensity and extent from the pleasure of the pig to the happiness of Brahmā. The body is not a tomb of the soul but is a poem of beauty and the senses express the joy of the union of purusa with prakrti. It is a bond and not a bondage. The lights of heaven gladden the hearts of all beings. Everything in the universe, 'high and low, great and small, tile and tower, bush and brake' is born of this joy. Even the holy ascetic that is rapt in voga in his Himālayan retreat and suppresses his cravings, cannot resist the seductive charms of kāma. Even the devas that reign in their heavenly worlds are ruled by Eros and carnal desires. The seeker after pleasure therefore summons all rational beings to employ their reason in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures as the sole end of life. If it is said that pleasure is mixed with pain, it is prudence to avoid the pain and relish the pleasure, and not to renounce the latter. The Vedas that deny the value of sense-pleasures are self-contradictory and false and are the reasonings and rhapsodies of fools. Therefore, concludes the Carvaka, the self is the body. and every one should eat, drink and be merry and feed on pleasures by fair means or foul. The philosophy of the Cārvāka is thus an appeal to commonsense and sensibility and though it may seem repugnant to reason is yet ineradicable, as its foundations are deeply laid in humannature and animal faith.

Pleasures are indeed pleasant but they are tinged with pain and lead to pain. Therefore hedonistic optimism inevitably leads to the pessimistic feeling that life is rooted in suffering.¹ The pessimist thinks that optimism is shallow and is founded on ignorance and that the superficial man alone possesses the happy-go-lucky frame of mind. The world is a vale of woe and it is false to say that nature is benign, as it is red in tooth and claw. Life lives on death and leads to death and there is a chain of destruction everywhere. Life is based on strife and cut-throat competition. The spectre of death stalks at the very centre of being and is the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> vide the chapter on "Sickmindedness" in James Varieties of Religious Experience.

retribution of the will to live. Every pleasure is fraught with pain and the pursuit of happiness as the end and aim of life is a mere will-o'-the-wisp. The socalled agreeable feeling is, to the pessimist, neither a present experience nor one of anticipation or recollection. The present is ever-fleeting and momentary pleasure is self-stultified. The aching thirst for life is a living contradiction. The world is irrational and "full of sound and fury." It is a monstrous error and is the worst of all possible worlds, and sorrow is inherent in the very nature of things and in the human will. Everything in life is passing away without any stability or substantiality; youth and manhood fade away, beauty perishes like the perfume of a minute, wealth vanishes, and power and reputation are shadows and not substantial things. Even the joy of falling in love is followed by the dejection of falling out of love. Behind the glories of life, there lurks a curdling gloom. Life is not merely evanescent; it has also no inner value, and reflection on its inner meaning constrains one to draw the conclusion that it is a tragic waste fraught with sadness and the agony of despair. Wickedness is the lawless law of life and goodness is only a show; vice gushes out of every pore of our being in torrential profusion. History is a record of the gradual decline of civilisation and the extinction of life. The poet who at first enjoys the comedy of life with its carnival of pleasures is driven by the logic of facts to the tragic conclusion that virtue and wisdom are only a delusion and have no abiding value. In the conflict between good and evil, evil overpowers good, and in the final catastrophe, both perish; the triumph of virtue over vice is only an ethical dream. The logician who seeks truth is confronted by the self-contradictions of intellectual life and is shipwrecked at the very entrance to the harbour. The artist delights in fancy and fiction, but devotion to art is only

an escape from life, akin to opium-eating followed by life-killing depression. The philosopher who knocks at the gates of knowledge is oppressed by the riddles of the Sphynx and finds no answer to them. Even the philanthropist that delights in humanitarian service is troubled by the thought that the individual withers in social uplift and that the perfection of society is itself futile like the attempt to straighten a dog's curly tail. This desperate discontentment with life and its values begets a mood of sceptical cynicism and the pessimist in his desperation is tortured by the dilemma 'whether it is nobler to endure the failure of life or take up arms against a sea of troubles' and end life at one stroke.

Vedānta does not accept or justify the thoroughgoing pessimism outlined above, as: it is opposed to the view that death is complete extinction and that the self is only a perishing series. Ontologically speaking, the atman is eternal and the changes of birth and death apply only to the phenomenal or the bodily self. When purusa, the self, falsely identifies himself with brakrti and its gunas, he subjects himself to the confusions of avidyā and the contractions of karma and suffers from the infinite hazards and hardships of metempsychosis. Life is neither entirely good nor entirely evil. It is neither wholly pleasant nor wholly painful, but is conditioned by their relativity and is of dual character. The moral experiences of punya and papa are ultimately traceable to the responsibility of the empirical self and are in no way attributable to fatalism or supernaturalism. Punya and pāba are not determined by reflective thought but are due to Vedic imperatives and dharma is what ought to be desired and done and adharma is what is prohibited. Every man reaps what he sows and evil is expiated by suffering, though every case of suffering, like that experienced in motherly love, is not due to evil. Good and evil are relative as they are linked by causal necessity and both are chains that fetter the soul, though the former is golden and the latter is of iron. Even in svarga, the bunya-ridden burusa is like a beast of burden to the devas, a thing ministering to their satisfaction, and when a man's bunya is exhausted, he is hurled down to the fetters of foetus-life. The happy jīvas of Brahmaloka are also subject to the causal necessity of karma arising from past volitional acts and will be born again in this world. Every jīva has the freedom to grow into godliness or lapse into asuric or demoniac life, but no one—not even a god—can escape the law of retribution, when once the deed is done. He has free will, but suffers from his wilfulness. All jīvas, from the butterfly to Brahmā, are alike conditioned by the law of karma and are subject to the cycle of births and deaths. Life is not a chapter of accidents, but has its foundation in the moral order. The noumenal self as purusa is free, but somehow and somewhen it gets phenomenalised, becomes bound to prakrti and is caught up in the causal necessity of karma. Purusa is imprisoned in the body made of brakrti and suffers from the succession of birth and death, pleasure and pain, till he regains his lost freedom. He is now in chains owing to himself; but he can be free.

The origin of avidyā-karma cannot be logically or temporally accounted for, as the ideas of logical and temporal priority belong to the phenomenal realm and have no transcendental value. But in the infinity of the temporal process of sṛṣṭi and pṛalaya, the avidyā-ridden self has somehow followed its downward career of wickedness and sin, though this is not due to any inner depravity or original sin. The

removal of evil is more important to the mumuksu than a logical account of its origin. Owing to the fall from spirituality, the evil wayward will of the jīva gathers momentum and the self has to pay the penalty by increased suffering. Karma causes rebirth and rebirth adds to the propensity to evil, and this vicious circle throws us into the maelstrom of misery. Suffering was already described as three-fold, namely ādhidaivika, ādhibhautika, and adhyātmika. The first is due to supernatural causes like the influence of the devas or gods; the second is also externally originated, but is due not to the gods but to animate and inanimate beings like the devastations caused by earthquakes and the third is subjective as it has a psycho-physical or central origin. Pain is sensational, supernatural or emotional; but in all cases misery follows from the law of retribution. Evil and suffering result from the abuse of freedom and cannot be explained in terms of fatalism and supernaturalism. True pessimism is not founded on morbidity or melancholia but is the result of philosophic or Vedāntic reflection. Desire and aversion (kāma and krōdha) are the twin laws of the life of sensibility and they are the root cause of all evil and suffering. Kāma is generated by the contact of the purusa with the objects of sense. Man hopes to be, but never is blest and the frustration of desire results in the feeling of disappointment and defeatism which brings on a mood of dejection and anger. Kāma-krōdha causes mental and moral confusion and self-deception and the dispersal of personality. Confusion feeds confusion and ends at last in the catastrophe of moral and spiritual death.2 The primary cause of suffering is therefore traceable to the desire for the objects of sense. While the moth, the deer, the elephant, the fish and the bee are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> B.G., III. 37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> B.G., II. 62, 63.

drawn to death in the act of gratifying a single sense organ, man is allured by the cumulative charm and solicitation of the five senses and suffers physical and moral death. From the cradle to the cremation ground life is a will-o-'the-wisp. mind is ever haunted by fear and the sense of insecurity, even in the celestial planes; the rosy romance of youth fades away and gives place to the gloom of old age and death. This mood of sickmindedness induced on the empirical self by its adventures in the unstable world of samsāra is brought out in the story of the weary traveller in the desert who, chased by a wild beast, jumps into a dry well and clings to some root, half way down, while a dragon is ready below to devour him, and yet he delights in licking off drops of honey where he clings. The jīva tortured by the ills of samsāra hangs on to the boughs of life, faces the gnawing of time and the dragon of death and yet he eagerly sucks the drops of pleasure like a frog that fondly seizes flies while it is itself being slowly devoured by a snake.

This sickmindedness is a temporary stage of reflective life and not a real resting place. The transition from the superficial and self-satisfied optimism of the Lōkāyata or voluptuary to the pessimism of the philosopher marks the rise and development of vairāgya through different stages. In the first stage, the worldly man pursues the pleasures of the senses and becomes a slave of passion, receives blows from nature and turns into a sceptic and cynic, but this change arrests the philosophical and moral development of the individual and is spiritually untenable as its effect is not far different from the morbidity and melancholia of the psychopathic temperament. In the second stage, when the feeling of disappointment assumes a religious colouring, it becomes a species of pseudo-sanyāsa of the sour-grape variety. When disappointments

increase, they deepen into disgust and life loses its zest and value and the feeling of world-weariness creeps on the soul and the mood of healthy-mindedness is changed into that of sickmindedness. While the optimist makes the most of life by regarding even pains as blessings in disguise, the sickminded philosopher thinks that life is a tale of woe and that the world is a Vanity Fair. He dreads every pleasure as a feeling fraught with pain. In a still higher stage of self-renunciation, pleasure and pain cancel each other and the mumuksu cultivates the attitude of S'ānkhyan or Stoic detachment. The dvandvas or pairs of opposites like success and failure. pleasure and pain, have no attraction for him, as he, in a mood of masterly inactivity, no longer identifies himself with the contending passions, but remains aloof as a spectator practising samatva (equanimity of mind). Even this state may lapse into a state of indifference or neutral point and life may become a contentless void without any positive value. Mumuksutva, as a desire for freedom from the world of samsāra, is a negative state; but freedom is not only freedom from a life of evil and misery but freedom towards another state, as every negation has a positive meaning and the exclusion of one alternative implies the affirmation of another. The idea of self-renouncement as a spiritual ideal implies the abandonment of the lower self of sensibility in favour of the higher self in the kaivalya state or the aloneness of the ātman. Ahankāra or the will to live a selfish life should stultify itself and thus affirm the true aham or self. Even the end as selfrealisation is only a half-way house, as it is ego-centric and not theo-centric: it is on the road to real freedom but is not the end itself. In the highest state of mumuksutva, selfrenouncement acquires its full positive meaning, and, by abandoning the carnal self of prakrti and the spiritual

self-centredness of kaivalya the mumuksu regards God as the centre and source of his life and becomes a bhakta or devotee. Renunciation of ahankāra and the realisation of the self gotogether, and by renouncing the lower self the highest Self is realised. The failure of life on the phenomenal plane is inevitable and the mood of sickmindedness brought on by such failure is justifiable. Virakti is essential to spiritual life, as it destroys the sensualism and the self-complacency of the Lokayata who is satisfied with the world as it is and it transcends the negations of Buddhistic pessimism and the indifferentism of the Stoic. The mumuksu with his genius for the absolute at first seeks the false infinite in the senses, but later realises that the joy of sensibility is fragmentary and fleeting and then seeks the true infinite that is beyond the senses. Visaya rāga or the desire for the pleasures. of sense is alba (insignificant) and asthira (evanescent); but Bhagavad raga or love of God leads to infinite and eternal bliss.

The ontology of *Vedānta* has no meaning apart from its teleology and the philosophy of values. Brahman is not merely the ultimate subject of rationalistic metaphysics, but is also the highest reality present in volitional and emotional consciousness. It is the ground of existence as well as the supreme good of life or *puruṣārtha*. The good is that at which all rational beings aim as the supreme value or *summum bonum*, and it is fourfold, *viz.*, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mōkṣa*. Economic goods like *artha* have only instrumental or market value and are a means to an end and not the end itself and not all the wealth of a Croesus or Kubera can give lasting satisfaction. The pursuit and possession of political power is equally futile on account of the instability inherent in it and the jealousy which it excites in the have-nots. This truth is

aforcibly expressed by the instance of Carlyle's shoeblack whose greed increases with satisfaction. Even when half the universe is offered to him, he grumbles and declares himself 'the most maltreated of men'. Moral good or dharma has no doubt an intrinsic value, as the only thing that is good without qualification is the performance of duty for its own sake. Moral effort is itself worth while and there is no substitute for it in this world or beyond it. But what is right or dharma cannot be separated from the goodness of the end, and moral good has no value apart from the supreme good as summum bonum. The end as pleasure is the agreeable feeling that arises when the object of desire is attained and is the sense of value, but it has neither definiteness nor duration. Hedonism in the psychological, ethical, or spiritual aspect cannot serve as a final theory in the philosophy of values. The first is meaningless, because, if every one seeks happiness as a psychological fact, it is absurd to say he ought to seek it as a purusārtha. The second is incomplete as it does not fully bring out the content of the ideal of happiness in the quantitative and qualitative aspects. There are degrees of pleasure as well as kinds of pleasure and there is no definite criterion or standard of preference. Besides, it is not the feeling of pleasure alone that a man seeks but also the object that yields satisfaction. If pleasure is the feeling of self-realisedness, it is not clear whether it is the animal, rational or spiritual self that is realised. The pleasure that arises when the burusa is gratified with the objects of sense varies and vanishes; the happiness of realising the burusa as distinct from brakrti is more enduring. but has no altruistic or religious motive. The bliss of knowing the inner Self or Brahman alone has abiding value; but this doctrine abandons the hedonistic view of  $k\bar{a}ma$  as the end. of life and accepts a non-hedonistic criterion. The highest

end of life is thus neither the acquisition of wealth and power, nor the performance of moral duty or *dharma* nor the satisfaction of desires, but the realisation of Brahman which is the highest good, the supreme duty and the infinite bliss.

If virtue and knowledge go together, bliss also is inseparable from them and therefore Brahmajñāna, Brahmaprayatna and Brahmānanda cannot be really separated though they may be logically analysed as the cognitional, conational and affective elements of the same spiritual experience. The mumuksu who enquires into the nature of Brahman as the supreme sat or Reality also desires to realise Brahman as the highest end of moral and aesthetic life. What is apprehended as the most valid truth is also attained as the most valuable end or good. Knowledge and value are thus mediate and immediate and the pursuit of truth as of pleasure is a progressive and immediate attainment. While the progressionist prefers pursuit to possession, the perfectionist as absolutist prefers possession or the state of eternal self-realisedness to pursuit. But the Visistadvaitin recognises the value of spiritual progress and the philosophical truth of the selfrealised nature of Brahman. The mumuksu equipped with jñāna and vairāgva seeks Brahman because he knows that Brahman is his Self. The moral and spiritual good which a man chooses and strives for presupposes the complete good of which the moral choice and the spiritual endeavour are integral aspects. The main steps in the path to perfection consist in the moral discipline or self-purification brought about by the performance of duty or Karma Yoga, the spiritual illumination of Jñāna Yōga and the loving meditation on Brahman or Bhakti Yōga.

The Upanisadic conception of the mumuksu transcends in its lofty sublimity the nature of the mere philosopher who speculates on the nature of reality without the requisite sādhanas or means. Before setting out in some detail the nature of the yogas or steps to realisation, the essential character of the mumuksu as a seeker after immortal bliss as indicated in the Upanisads may be considered. When Yama, the god of death, offers to young Naciketas boons, earthly and celestial, which cannot be easily attained by mortals, Naciketas declines all of them on the ground that they are evanescent, chooses the good by rejecting the pleasant and thus follows the way of wisdom and eternal life.1 Nārada says to Sanatkumāra that he knows every science, art and philosophy but is still stricken with sorrow and learns that the weary search to find eternal bliss is not in secular and Vedic knowledge but in the Vedāntic wisdom of Brahman. There is no bliss in anything finite, but it is in the infinite alone. Brahman alone is free from evil, sin and suffering. Indra likewise comes to know that, if he realises Brahman by freeing himself from his bodily self, he would obtain all the worlds and attain all desires in the world of Brahman.3 In the immortal words of the Veda or the Upanisad, on the same tree there are two inseparable birds and while one of them eats the sweet and bitter fruits, the other with brilliant plumage shines in all serenity. The finite self should shake off good and evil and soar heavenward till it becomes one with its eternal Other and shed its sorrows of samsāra. Maitreyī tells her husband Yājñavalkya that the

<sup>1</sup> Kath, Up., I. i. 26 to 29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> söham bhagavö mantravid eväsminätmavit . . . tarati s'ökam ätmavid iti söham bhagavän s'öcämi.—Ch. Up., VII. i. 3.

sa sarvāms'ca lökān āpnöti sarvāms'ca kāmān yastam ātmānam anuvidya vijānāti.—Ch. Up., VIII. vii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> dvā suparņā sayujā sakhāyā samānam vṛkṣam pariṣasvajāte l tayōr anyaḥ pippalam svādvatti anas nan anyō abhicākas ti.—Mund. Up., III. i.1.

possession of the whole earth would not satisfy her and seeks the way of eternal life. <sup>1</sup> Brahmajñāna is not for the materialistic optimist that seeks the lusts of the flesh nor to the pessimistic philosopher to whom life is not worth living, but for the Vedāntic mumukṣu who seeks to return to Brahman, his real self, and thus regain the eternal values of divine life.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> sā hövāca Maitreyi yannu me iyam bhagöh sarvā pṛthivi vittena pūrnā syāt katham tenāmṛtā syāmiti neti hövāca Yājñavalkyah . . . I sā hövāca Maitreyi yenāham nāmṛtā syām kimaham tena kuryām.— Bṛ. Up., IV. iv. 2 and 3.

#### CHAPTER XIII

## KARMA YŌGA

KARMA is different from Karma Yōga, as the former furnishes the datum of the moral life, and the latter its discipline. The study of karma is the subject-matter of the psychology of the moral self, while Karma Yoga deals with the moral determination of the ideal involved in conduct. Consciousness is essentially conative, whether it is sensorymotor or idea-motor, and karma refers to the conative tendency of consciousness in all its levels. Even introspection is an activity. Cessation from karma in thought, word or deed is a psychological impossibility. 1 Karma as voluntary action is purposive, and involves the idea of end, which is called kāma or desire. Kāma is either externally originated (sparsaja) or centrally initiated (sankalbaja); but in either case, it is the desire for the objects of sense. Owing to the conservation of moral values, the effect of every karma leaves its impress in the psycho-neural mechanism or mind-body, and it is then known as an instinct, disposition or vāsanā. This mind-body, which contains the karma-complex, acts on the empirical self, and is acted on by it, and the millions of nerves embedded in the human nervous system is evidence of the infinite chain of the causality of karma. The story of the evolution of karma has no beginning, in the sense that it cannot be logically or temporally explained, and karma may therefore be described as a matter of moral faith, as the result of anādi-avidvā (beginningless ignorance). The jīva is therefore impelled by its ancient propensity of avidyā-karma to seek the pleasures of sensibility, and it follows the previously shaped pathways of error and evil and the career of transmigration or samsāra. Owing to its proneness to evil, which is self-created, and not innate or inherited, the self desires the objects of sense; but the infinite, which alone can give true satisfaction, is not in the senses but beyond them, and no finite object gives true satisfaction. When the desire is frustrated, it generates anger, anger clouds the intellect and confounds the natural light of reasoning. Confusion destroys practical reason and leads to moral decay. The empirical self is imprisoned in the see-saw of avidyā-karma, and subjects itself to the hazards of metempsychosis, and when it is overpowered by tamas, it almost becomes a bare monad or mode of matter without any moral consciousness. But the infinite within the jīva, urges it to emerge into higher stages and ascend to the human level. While animals act unconsciously towards an end not realised morally, man alone is conscious of the end, as he has practical reason as well as feeling. Every voluntary action involves the idea of an end and presupposes the distinction between the doer, the deed and the satisfaction that results from the realisation of the end. When the sensualist desires an object, it is a felt want, and the object of desire is said to be as a thing that would satisfy that want. The self

¹ sangāt sanjāyate kāmah kāmāt krodhobhijāyate ll krodhād bhavati sammohah sammohāt smrtivibhramah l smrtibhrams'ād buddhinās'o buddhi nās'āt praņas'yati ll.

desires pleasure in the object, and this pleasure is different from the object of pleasure. The natural self, as the mode of brakrti, is influenced by its three gunas of satva, rajas and tamas, and a knowledge of the gunas is therefore essential in ascending from the psychology of what is given in conduct to the ethics of what ought to be. The tāmasic mind is steeped in ignorance, slothfulness and hesitancy. It does not resist evil, but lazily acquiesces in it. It lacks decision of character and drifts mechanically in a stupid and stubborn way. The rājasic mind is roving and restless, and delights in the pleasures of self-domination and self-glorification. The restless rāgī is compared to a maddened monkey stung by a scorpion and possessed by an evil spirit, and life to him is a "fitful fever full of sound and fury." The rāgī is swayed by the love of power and possession, and he exerts his will to power by enslaving others and seeking world-dominion. When the self is dominated by satva, it transcends the tāmasic state of animal existence and the rājasic life of adventure, and develops moral consciousness. The sātvic person has clear and distinct ideas. and knows the distinction between the life of passion and the life of reason, and, since knowledge and virtue go together, he practises virtue on account of its intrinsic value. The psychology of the three gunas 2 throws light on the moral character of the doer, the deed and the self-satisfaction resulting from the realisation of the end. The satvic agent is an anahamvadi. who sheds his egoism and self-love by means of his sanity and sobriety. His deed is emptied of kāma, and his feeling is not quite pleasant to start with, but is happiness in the end. When the animal self is thus moralised, it rises from the tāmasic level of inertia to the rājasic state of restless adventure, and at last evolves into sātvic serenity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> B. G., XIV. 8.

The ethics of Karma Yoga may be developed by a criticism of the extreme theories of hedonism and rationalism in the west and the east. The hedonist seeks the satisfaction of sensibility and aims at pleasure for the sake of pleasure as the only end and aim of human conduct. The extreme hedonist or Cārvāka distrusts reason, refuses to look before or after, and tries to secure the pleasure of the moment; but his theory stultifies itself, as rationality is the essential quality of man. The more moderate hedonist therefore utilises reason as the ally of passion, and thinks of happiness as the end and aim of life as a whole. The altruist pursues the logic of hedonism still further, and defines the end of conduct as the attainment of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The Vedavādin, who seeks Vedic sanction for his conduct, does not accept the sensuous and rational origin of pleasure, but relies on the Vedic imperatives and their hedonistic value here and in svarga. But all the hedonistic theories are shipwrecked on the distinction between pleasure and the objects of pleasure and on their differences in quality and quantity. Pleasure is not only freedom from pain, but is also positive enjoyment, and it is never attained in the world of the objects of sense. Even the joys of svarga or extra-mundane delights are only sensual or kāma-rūba and have only transient and not lasting value. Hedonistic ritualism is formal and extrinsic, and has no intrinsic worth. Buddhistic and Sankhyan ethics go to the opposite extreme, and uphold the rationalistic view that passion should be subdued by reason. The Buddhistic formula of the eightfold noble path insists on the destruction of the will to live and the doer-consciousness, and favours exit from life as the end of conduct. The Sānkhyan view is more concrete. as it affirms the immutability of the purusa and the mutability

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> B.G., II. 42.

of *prakṛti*, and defines the moral end as the practice of the detachment of the *puruṣa* from the allurements of *prakṛti*. But this view is also untenable, as the *Sānkhyan* spectator sees nothing and does nothing. The Stoic and Kantian theory of morals also recognises the dignity of reason, but it is also a negative account, as reason without emotional content is empty and formal. Feeling without reason is blind, and reason without feeling is empty, and the *Vedāntic* view of *Karma Yōga* avoids these pitfalls, and follows the golden mean.

The meaning of Karma Yōga is further developed by a refutation of the activistic and ascetic view of morals. The activist, like the virile westerner, engages himself in incessant work for promoting his own welfare or for altruistic service or for a co-operative adventure with the finite god, who has the will to fight evil, and wins in the end. The man of action, with his will to work and win, hates the motto of the fatalist, who resigns himself to the inevitable, and endures the burden of life with indifferent acquiescence. With restless rajasic feeling and explosive energy, he plunges into work with a view to curing the ills of life and conquering his environment. The man with a precipitate will or mercurial temperament often goes forward with reckless energy and without due deliberation. As William James says in his "Psychology," the pent-up passion suddenly breaks through the dam and discharges itself in catastrophic activity without any controlling power. A higher type of volition presupposes forethought before the final decision is taken, and it implies the feeling of effort and the fiat of the will by which we thrive and strive for ever. There is more joy in the pursuit of an ideal than in its possession. The world-shatterers and reformers belong to this activistic type. But incessant work without rest or reflection is morally

undesirable, as it stresses overtaction at the expense of inner purity and peace. The ascetic attitude offers a striking contrast to the rājasic condition of mind, as it inhibits the free flow of motor-energy and blocks it up. It begins with selfmortification or suppression of the flesh in the physiological sense, and may end in moral inanity, in which introspection may never reach the level of effectiveness. The habit of inhibiting the external senses and motor-energy and cherishing morbid feelings and calling it virtue is rightly condemned as cold-blooded hypocrisv. In the higher stages, the ascetic becomes a contemplative, who is interested in subduing his animal propensities and vanquishing all vāsanās or dispositions. But this introspective habit of arresting thought atrophies thought and the very springs of life. Introspection paralyses effort and leads to moral impotence. The highest stage of introversion consists in absolute self-renouncement and conversion to the stage of sannyāsa by withdrawal from the world. Sannyāsa may be fascinating and beneficial to the reflective philosopher at certain stages of his life, but it is only a means to an end and not the end itself. Besides, it cannot be universalised. The ethics of Karma Yoga strikes a middle path between activism in excess and asceticism in excess, as it favours renunciation in action as opposed to renunciation of action as the ideal of conduct.

The ethics of niṣkāma karma or action without the desire for the fruit thereof may now be expounded in the light of the Gītā metaphysics of morals, which, for profundity and practical value, stands unmatched in the history of ethics in the east and in the west. While every living being does its karma according to a purpose, man alone has the conception of karma

<sup>1</sup> B.G., III. 6,

owing to his practical reason or moral consciousness, including reason and will. In a moral situation arising from a conflict of desires, he can exercise his discrimination by weighing its pros and cons and arrive at a decision. By his buddhi he can distinguish between the ksetrajña or dehi (the embodied self) and the ksetra or deha and know that as the ātman, he is aparināma or free from the mutations of matter or prakrti, pramātā or the subject that is conscious of himself and the world of nature different from the atman, and avinasi or the immortal self distinct from the pseudo-self of prakrti, which is subject to a series of births and deaths. Buddhi develops into vyavasāvātmikā buddhi or the disciplined thought of the mumuksu, which frees karma from the distractions of visaya kāma or sensual desire and the perils of moral particularism, and fosters the one-pointed aim of moksa kama or desire for release. The sensitive self is withdrawn from the seductions of sensibility and given a moral direction and fixity by the idea of niskāma karma or the performance of karma without kāma or viṣaya rāga. Niṣkāma karma as a negative concept has a twofold meaning, as it excludes the subjective influence of animal inclinations of raga and dvesa and the objective ends of utility or lābha and alābha (gain and loss). Karma Yōga does not rest on the desire for pleasure or personal likes and dislikes, which are the ruling motives of our empirical conduct; nor is it conditioned by any external end as economic gain or political power. Niskāma karma is thus the performance of action without being impelled by the hedonistic ends of pursuing sukha (pleasure) and avoiding duhkha (pain) or the pairs of opposites or the utilitarian ends of securing success or lābha and avoiding failure or alābha. Even the good deeds performed to please the gods and win favours from them are commercial transactions that impair the dignity

and intrinsic worth of moral life. Niskāma karma is thus good in itself without qualification, and has its own intrinsic value. It is duty for the sake of duty irrespective of consequences.1 Such duty as a negative view of morals may be different from a positive account, but it is not bare negation. None in this world is free from karma and even the state of naiskarmva or philosophic inaction is influenced by the interplay of the three gunas of prakrti. The jñāni himself has to maintain his body by activity. The whole cosmic order is also a moral order, and is sustained by the law of karma. The devas have to do their duty in the interests of world welfare. Even Isvara, the supreme Lord, who is not bound by karma, is ever active as the moral ruler of the universe.2 The law of karma thus rules the cosmic order, whether its causality is conditioned or free, and the jīva, which is imprisoned by the chain of avidyā-karma owing to its age-long identification with prakrti, can never escape from the wheel of karma as long as it is in the world of samsāra. The empirical or earth-bound self as the doer doing the deed is therefore externally determined by the gunas of prakrti, and whether its mind is clear, calm and happy or confused, restless and unhappy or ignorant, indolent and inert, it is never free from the domination of the gunas, which have become its habit or second nature. Akarma or inaction is thus a psychological impossibility; but, ethically, it is possible for the self to dissociate itself from guna-ridden karma, as it is essentially the atman and not the bodily self moulded on the pattern of prakrti. The moral philosopher, who knows the psychology of the empirical 'me' or ahankara as the result of the conjunction of the atman with prakrti, concludes that karma is due

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> B. G. II, 47.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> ahankaravimudhatma kartaham iti manyate.—B. G., III. 27. <sup>3</sup> guṇā guṇeşu vartanta iti matvā na sajjate.—B. G., III. 28.

to the action and reaction of the gunas, is not influenced by the conceit "I am the doer," and seeks to renounce the egocentric mentality or ahankāra. The formula is expressed thus: "So act that you may regard all action as determined by the gunas of prakṛti and not as determined by the ātman." Karma Yōga thus consists in abandoning not the deed, but the doer-consciousness. It is the process of self-realisation by self-renouncement or self-stripping; the most essential requisite of Karma Yōga is the shedding of selfishness and the giving up of the false notion taking the form "I am the doer" and "the world is mine". The ethical idea of self-renunciation is thus at first negative, but as it fills up in meaning, it leads to self-realisation.

The performance of disinterested duty presupposes the Sānkhyan knowledge of the spiritual self as contrasted with the empirical 'me' or dehātmā and the application of the knowledge to Karma Yōga; it is thus a synthesis of scientific theory and moral practice. Karma Yōga combines rational insight and active endeavour, and when the yōgin is well-disciplined, he becomes sthitaprajña or steadfast in knowledge, and is definitely on the road to self-realisation or ātmajñāna. There are four stages in the evolution of yōga from moral outlook to spiritual insight. The outgoing tendency of the mind is first arrested and directed inward, and this stage is called yatamāna samjñā or effort made to direct the mind inward.¹ In the next stage, the mind is calm, and is neither elated by success nor depressed by failure, and it is called vyatireka samjñā ². When the mind

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> yadā samharate cāyam kūrmöngāniva sarvas'aḥ l indriyānindriyārthebhyaḥ. . . . !—B.G., II. 58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> yah sarvatrānabhisnehastatratprāpya s'ubhās'ubham l nābhinandati na dveṣṭi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā.—B. G., II. 57.

is self-centred and steady, it reaches a higher stage called ekendriva samiñā 1. In this stage the vogin endeavours to wipe off the indelible impress left by the effect of previous karma in the psycho-neural mechanism. The culmination of this process consists in the atman knowing itself 2 and being satisfied with itself. Here the impress of karma or vāsanā is completely destroyed, and the highest stage of steadfastness is reached. This stage is called vasīkāra samjñā. Self-reverence and self-knowledge are the highest ideals of moral consciousness and the joy of this self-knowledge is different from hedonistic enjoyments and also Stoic or Sankhyan detachment. When the atman falsely identifies itself with prakrti, it belongs to the world of sense, is imprisoned in the causality of karma, and subjects itself to the hazards of rāga-dvesa; but when the self knows that he is the ātman and not a mode of acit, he is morally free and enjoys svarājya or self-sovereignty. The bodily self seeks the lusts of the flesh and is indrivarama or delighting in the senses: but the moral self subdues them and is ātmāramā or delighting in the atman. Like the driver who has perfect control over his horses, the self subjugates the senses and acquires self-mastery,3 and not even a deva can conquer a man who has conquered himself. He attains this moral autonomy by insight and endeavour and not by the empty rationalism of the Sānkhya and the Stoic or the blind activism of the Mīmāmsaka, the Vedic ritualist.

Niṣkāma karma is an imperative of duty of the form "Do your duty without caring for the consequences," and

¹ vītarāgabhayakrōdhaḥ.—B. G., II. 56.

² atmanyevātmanā tuṣṭaḥ.—B. G., II. 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> tasyendriyāņivas'yāņi sad as'vā iva sāratheḥ.—Kaṭh. Up., I. iii. 6.

its sanction is based on revelation and not on reason. The ethics of karma as a rational exposition of conduct is not satisfying, as the reality of the moral distinction between right and wrong cannot be logically proved. Moral consciousness presupposes the eternity of the atman and the existence of the Paramatman or God, who is absolutely good. and it is not a postulate of natural religion, but a moral faith in revealed religion or stastra. The belief in supernatural religion, which seeks to establish divine omnipotence by sacrificing the intrinsic reality of the moral law, tends to justify the existence of unmerited suffering and the unmerited grace of God. The idea of winning divine favour without deserving it destroys the primacy and the austerity of moral life. Religion is therefore founded on ethics, and in a true ethical religion, omnipotence and justice go together. The law of karma is founded on, and fulfilled in, the divine idea of justice and righteousness. The imperative of niskāma karma is a divine command, which has an absolute claim upon our obedience, and the violation of the law is the repudiation of the divine will and the refusal to listen to the voice of God in the inner moral consciousness of mankind. The kind of duty may be determined by one's temperament and station in life: but the nature or inner motive of karma is the same in all, viz., duty for duty's sake, irrespective of inclination within and utility without. From the standpoint of ethical religion, it is more true to say that Isvara wills the good than to say that what He wills is good. God is absolutely good, and it is the aim of the ethics of niskāma karma that man ought to choose the way of goodness so that he may grow into the goodness of God. The highest moral good consists in following the categorical imperative as a duty that ought to be done and not as a coercive law that must be followed.

As classic illustrations of niskāma karma, the practice of tapas, dāna, yajña, and warfare may be considered. In all these cases, the tāmasic state of ignorance and inertia is overcome by the rājasic mentality of restless activity. When satva dominates over rajas, it ousts the will to self-glorification and enables the will to be ruled by reason and to follow the course of disinterested action. While the Vedic hedonist conforms to these commandments with a view to attaining earthly and celestial pleasures, the Vedantin as an expert in Sankhyan knowledge performs them without any expectation of reward. Tapas 1 is a duty to the self and is the practice of self-purification in thought, word and deed, and connotes the virtues of truthfulness, ahimsa and patience. Dāna as a duty to others is the exercise of benevolence without any egoistic calculation, and it is a gift to the needy man in which the right hand does not know what the left hand does. Yajña as a duty to the gods is offering sacrifices to the devas, who help in maintaining the cosmic order, without the taint of bargaining with them for boons. The ethics of warfare condemns vindictiveness, cowardice and greed as well as misplaced pity, and it is a virtue to be practised by the Ksatriya as a guardian of society. It is righteous warfare in the interests of the weak and the victimised for the protection of dharma and the destruction of adharma. It is the duty of every man to maintain the moral order of society and its solidarity by doing the duties of his station in life without asserting his egoism or exclusive

<sup>1...</sup>s'aucamārjavam brahmacaryam ahimsā ca...—B.G., XVII. 14. anudvegakaram vākyam satyam—B.G., XVII. 15. ātmavinigrahaḥ bhāvasams'uddhiḥ.—B.G., XVII. 16. dātavyam iti yad dānam diyate anupakāriņe l des'e kāle ca pātre ca...—B.G., XVII. 20. aphalākānkṣibhiryajno vidhi dṛṣṭō ya ijyate yastavyameveti manas samādhāya...—B.G., XVII. 11.

self-feeling. These examples serve to bring out the solidarity of life in all its levels by insisting on duties rather than rights, and are far more comprehensive than the classic examples adduced in Kantian ethics. The ātman is not, like the things of prakṛti, a thing which excites the animal instincts of self-preservation, acquisitiveness, sex and pugnacity, but is a person or self in the highest sense of the term having his own intrinsic dignity. While the phenomenalised self is the slave of sensibility and self-love, the noumenal self has mastery over its mental environment and sheds its exclusiveness.

The moral advantages accruing from the practice of niṣkāma karma as the master thought of Vedāntic morals may now be summed up before the next stage of self-realisation is considered. A man who is not allured by the seductions of sensibility is a real yogin and by conquering himself, he has conquered the whole world. While the sensualist falls into the pitfalls of heteronomy, the karma yogin attains moral autonomy, which is more valuable than political conquest. Disinterested duty fosters reverence for the moral law and arouses the feeling of dignity and sublimity. The moral idea of samatva or equanimity is not a harmonious mean between the spiritual and the animal aspects of life. It brings out the superiority of soul-power over brute force. The moral philosopher is not an indifferent spectator of the drama of life, but is himself the battle ground, the contending parties and the conqueror. He avoids the extremes of the voluptuary, who abandons himself to the impulsive life of viṣayarāga and the ascetic who resorts to inhibition. He follows the middle course between the active and the contemplative life as it is more easy, natural and conducive to spirituality than karma or karma sannyāsa. The true moral evil is not the existence of the self in the world of embodied life, but the falsity and falsehood of the ahankāra-ridden ego that pretends to be the ātman, but is not really so. Matter is not in itself evil, but the materialistic view fosters evil-mindedness. The body is a living temple of God or Brahmapuri, and evil is in wrongful possession and enjoyment of it. The self is the eternal ātman; but it simulates prakṛti and suffers from the consequent errors and evils. The true karma yōgin sheds the egoistic feeling of ahankāra and the commercial view of karma, and the moral self ascends to the higher stage of Jñāna Yōga. The transition from Karma Yōga to Jñāna Yōga is thus a transition from self-renouncement to self-realisation, and marks a higher stage in spiritual progression. Niṣkāma karma is really not an end in itself, but is a means to mukti through self-purification and self-knowledge.

### CHAPTER XIV

# JÑĀNA YŌGA

KARMA YOGA as rationalised karma is a direct path to self-realisation or ātmāvalōkana and is preferred on account of its ease, naturalness, efficacy and freedom from the naturalistic fallacy of mistaking the ātman for the anātman or natural self.1 Karma and jñāna interpenetrate each other, and by moralising jñāna and rationalising karma, the metaphysic of morals passes into the philosophy of the self. This goal is reached more easily by practical reason than by reason itself, as the life of reason is often emptied of moral and emotional content, and becomes a hypostatised abstraction. There is a transition from the empirical or hedonistic ethics of kāmya karma to the rationalistic ethics of niskāma karma and the latter view has its consummation in the philosophical ideal of self-realisation. The spiritual self is no doubt more allied to the rational than to the sensitive self, and therefore Jñāna Yōga is more adequate to self-intuition than Karma Yōga: but in practice, rationalism often leads to more pitfalls than activism, and wisdom consists in rationalising karma and not in abandoning it. When karma is illumined by jñāna, the metaphysical knowledge of the ātman, Karma Yōga is as effective as Jñāna Yōga.

¹ karmayogasya antargatātmajñānatvad apramādatvāt sukaratvāt nirapekşatvāt ca jyāyastvam.—Gītābhaṣya, V. Introd.

In Iñana Yōga the knowledge of the atman is mediate, but in ātmāvalōkana it is immediate, and the best evidence for the proof of the atman is in direct experience. Atmavalokana presupposes the speculative knowledge about the self as a real possibility. There is a gradual transition from the metaphysics of morals of niṣkāma karma to the spiritual philosophy of ātma kāma. It is a passage from the moral ideal of what a man ought to do to the spiritual enquiry of what a man ought to be. It is the development of the moral 'ought' into a deeper 'is'. While doing good is an external duty, being good is an inner virtue. The mumuksu who desires to know the ātman, is called the ārurukṣu, or one who strives to ascend to spirituality, and he ought to do his duty till he realises the atman and becomes the arudha or awakened spirit. In the intuition of the ātman all activity is swallowed up. When the end is reached, there is no longer any need for endeavour. While moral life is a pursuit of truth, spiritual life connotes its possession.

The spiritual philosopher that seeks self-knowledge has the freedom to become better and realise the best, and is therefore not a slave of the causality of karma or avidyā. Manas is, especially to the mumukṣu, the free cause of either samsāra or mukti and though his prārabdha karma is a necessary consequence of his ancient vāsanās or inner dispositions, he is not a necessary agent or instrument of karma, as he has the will to win freedom or lose it. The agency ascribed to prakṛti and the prakṛti-ridden ātman is traceable to avidyā in the moral sense of karma¹, as contrasted with the monistic idea of adhyāsa and abhāva.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It should be noted that avidya in this sense is quite different from the avidya of the Advaitin. (See S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 101.)

The jīva is a spiritual entity and not a false or fictitious being due to some innate nescience or self-deceiving nature of the absolute. If the idea of agency arises from adhyāsa and is not, like the heat of fire, the true nature of the self, which is real in itself, then moral and spiritual freedom would become illusory, and seeking self-realisation itself would be a mere appearance. The jīva is a real self, and its desire for self-knowledge is not a delusion but a real process of self-revelation, involving the conquest of karma and the removal of avidyā. Spiritual freedom is thus different from the determinism of karma and the illusionism of avidyā and is freedom from the joint influence of avidyā-karma. It is the aim of yoga as Karma Yoga or Jñana Yoga to help the atman to free itself from the confusions of avidyā and the causal determinations of karma and shine in its own splendour. The term empirical or natural self connotes dehātmā or the embodied soul or the ātman that has falsely identified itself with prakrti; the moral self is the karma yōgin that has a theoretic knowledge of the ātman as different from prakrti and does his duty in a disinterested way. The state of atmavalokana is called the realisation of the spiritual self. While the metaphysic of morals analyses the nature of niskāma karma, the philosophy of the spirit expounds the rationale of ātmāvalokana. It is only by means of self-purification that the ideal of self-perfection can be achieved.

The philosophy of the ātman has not received due attention in the history of thought, and its realm is often regarded as a no-man's land. While materialistic monism abolishes the self by making it a bye-product of matter, the absolute of the idealistic monist swallows up its very being. Even

religion in its deistic aspect seeks to exalt God at the expense of the spirit, and does not adequately bring out the full nature and status of personality. The atman is not an appearance of reality, but is an entity that has its own unique nature, its existence is self-proved, and it can realise itself in intuitive perception or ātmasākṣātkāra. The ātman is not the body feeling, will or cognition, but has its own spiritual identity apart from its psycho-physical contents. The ātman survives its mind-body and exists on its own account. It has a unity and continuity in the incarnate state of samsara as well as in the discarnate state of mukti on account of its moral and spiritual consciousness and striving for mukti. This experience is evidence of its personal immortality. Persons may have the same intelligence, but the self-feeling carries its own personal or spiritual worth. The ātman, distinguished from its empirical contents, is not impoverished thereby, but shines as an eternal substance, subject or self, and even the monist that denies duality, has to posit a plurality of jīvas to satisfy the claims of practical reason. The duality of the subjectobject relation is different from the duality between two subjects. They are mutually related, and one subject cannot be resolved into another. If A falls asleep, B does not vanish, but is quite awake. A and B are therefore poly-centric. In the case of love between two persons each is the subject of love as well as the object of love, owing to the intrinsic value of the persons who enter into the relation. The relation is spiritual and not logical and is the very foundation of inter-subjective intercourse and the consciousness of kind. The world of souls is a spiritual realm transcending conceptual knowledge which suffers from the perils of scepticism on the one hand and of subjectivism on the other. It is the fatal defect of pantheism, at least in its lower

form, that it recognises only God and nature as a short-cut to unity, and omits the philosophy of the self. It is the self that enquires into nature and God, and, by relinquishing its materialistic associations, seeks to know itself and its inner self. It is the supreme merit of Visistādvaita that it lays special stress on the philosophy of the self, and insists on atmadarsana or vision of the self as a prelude to the philosophy of religion.

The realisation of the pratyagātman or inner self, the goal of Jñāna Yōga, is achieved only by a rigorous moral and spiritual discipline. The first requisite in this yōgic process is the training in samatva or spiritual equanimity, the exact meaning of which is, however, difficult to define in logical terms. The instinct of acquisitiveness can never coexist with the yearning of the mumuksu, and it profits him little to gain the whole world and lose his ātman. The renouncement of economic goods is therefore indispensable to spiritual progress, and the aspirant should regard dust and diamond equally worthless. The dvandvas like success and failure, pleasure and pain, and likes and dislikes lead to the dilemma of the divided life. The moral self should therefore practise samatva, which includes the virtues of indifference, endurance and detachment in an ascending scale. Introspective life implies indifference to the utilitarian ideas of success and failure. There are three ways of overcoming the hedonistic hazards of pleasure and pain. Every pleasure is fraught with pain, and is therefore to be avoided; or every pain is a blessing in disguise, and is therefore to be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> parama prāpya bhūtasya parasya brahmaṇaḥ . . . prāptyupāyabhūtam tad upāsanam . . . tadaṅgabhūtam ātmajūānapūrvakarmānuṣṭhāna sādhyam prāptuḥ pratyagātmanaḥ yāthātmyadars'anam.—Gita Bhāṣyam, VII. Introduction.

endured; or both alike should be treated with indifference. The twin-evils of raga-dvesa are attributable to abhimana or false identification with the body, and they can be overcome by assuming the attitude of the indifferent spectator or dissociation of the self from its fleshly cravings. The psychology of the three gunas enables the mumuksu to transcend the inertia of tamas and the restless drive of rajas by disinterested work and to attain the nirguna stage or detachment from the influence of prakrti. Samatva also connotes the state of tranquillity which is awakened by subduing the vāsanās and practising Karma Yōga. In any case, it does not refer to the Greek idea of balancing the extremes by averaging them, or by arriving at a harmonious mean between spirituality and animality. In the positive sense, it includes the sanity of thought, the sobriety of self-conquest and the serenity of knowing the effulgent ātman. It is a yōgic attitude which can be better experienced than explained in conceptual terms, but the sādhana can be expounded in a scientific way.

Jñāna niṣṭha starts with the reflective analysis of the ideas of pratyagātman or the inner self and dehātman or the embodied self and the progression in spiritual endeavour. The body is not the ātman, and animal perfection is neither intelligible nor attainable, though physical wellbeing is essential to spirituality. Even self-culture and the formation of sātvic habits are only means to self-knowledge. Spiritual endeavour is both a negative method of vairāgya or self-renouncement and a positive way of abhyāsa! or introversion. The former is a process of self-stripping and self-simplification, which is known as the method of

<sup>1</sup> B. G., VI. 35

spiritual induction. As in the case of gold in the refiner's fire, the dross of ahankāra is removed. But self-. discipline is not to be confused with self-mutilation or self-extinction, as the renunciation of the lower self and the realisation of the higher self go together. The more spiritual a thing is, the more real it is, and the jñānī seeks remove the veils of ajñāna and enter into the inner sanctuary of ātmajñāna as the sāksin or spectator of the psychic changes. Introversion consists in withdrawing the mind from the cinema shows of ancient vāsanās and the distractions of surface consciousness and focussing the will on the centre. Thought is not merely suppressed but is thought away. By entering into the inner sanctuary, consciousness freed from functioning on the sensuous plane seeks to return to the centre and this is derived from mono-ideism. In this way the iñani enters into the orison of inner quiet; but even this state is only a half-way house to atmajñana. The state of inner quiet should not lapse into the evils of quietism or lava like passivity and nothingness, which is like the repose of a log of wood. Quietism is a danger zone in spiritual ascent. as consciousness is likely to be attenuated and destroyed in that rarefied atmosphere. In ātmāvalākana the vrttis or mental modes of brakrti alone are destroyed and not the self. The ātman is not annulled but is enriched in the process of abhvāsa or repeated practice, and it is therefore idle to say that it is a method of elimination or abstraction.

The ārurukṣu, or yōgin desirous of ascent, who desires ātmajñāna, is no longer allured by wealth or bound by social ties, as his consciousness is withdrawn from all objective or external activities and turned inward. The yōgin retires to a sequestered and pure spot and focusses his citta or mind on

the ātman by subduing its fugitive and fickle-minded nature. The intuition of the atman is his only endeavour and end, and it alone gives him supreme satisfaction. Yogic sadhana consists of the eight well-known stages of yama, niyama, āsana, prānāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇa, dhyāna and samādhi. Yama is the moral practice of truthfulness, ahimsa, contentment, continence, poverty, and the will to receive no favours or benefits. Continence is the sublimation of sex-energy or retas into spiritual energy or ojas. Nivama is the transition from restraint to self-restraint and the discipline of the mind-body resulting in self-purification, study, reflection, austerity and the attunement of the mind to the will of God. Asana is the physical control of the body by keeping it stiff, symmetrical and straight and thus overcoming its tāmasic languor and rājasic restlessness. Prānāyāma is the control of prāna or the vital breath by balancing the respiratory function of prana and apana with a view to attain psychic control. These four stages are steps to yōgic introversion and are not yoga in the strict sense of the term. Pratyāhāra is the arresting of the outgoing senses and attuning them to the inner sense. Dhārana is the focussing of manas on an object, by withdrawing it from the distractions of sense and the tumult of the vāsanās or dispositions. When the self-centred citta passes into the state of ceaseless introversion, dhāraņa deepens into dhyāna. The habit of philosophic reflection spiritualises the mind by removing the distraction of manas, the restlessness of citta and the ego-centric conceit of ahankāra. Thought ceases when it reflects on itself, but it is not a case of suppression or extinction. Dhyana has its completion in samādhi, when the contemplation of the ātman becomes a direct intuition. In samādhi, consciousness ascends from the conative and reflective levels and returns to its own pure state of aloneness and the self-effulgent joy of sahasrāra. The process of yōga is thus a philosophic and spiritual discipline, and is not to be falsely identified with mere psychic control, occultism, or the siddhi-seeking mentality. The yōgic endeavour of the ārurukṣu to ascend is consummated in the intuition of the ārūḍha. In the ārūḍha, the ancient karma complex is entirely burnt out in the fire of spirituality.

The end as self-realisation is also a social good, and the social ideal here implied is ultimately that of the mumuksu and not that of the citizen of a state or of a political philosopher. The concept of social progress is a spiritual ideal, and is different from that of the process of nature. While process is a law of nature or prakrti or ceaseless change or evolution, the idea of progress is governed by the rule of karma and the freedom of the moral self. The cosmos hangs together as a unity and is conditioned by the law of causation; but the progress of humanity has no meaning apart from the spiritual growth of the individuals that constitute society. This view is opposed to that of utilitarianism and humanism. Humanity is not an aggregate of individuals in which each man counts as one and no one as more than one, as such an arithmetical idea is entirely alien to the atmanistic theory of progress. Likewise, the humanistic ideal of striving for a better world as a substitute for otherworldliness is a species of secular morality, which is not founded on the spiritual values of life, and has therefore no stability. Humanism may be a corrective to the materialistic and supernaturalistic ideas of life, but it may have its nemesis in exclusive individualism. The Vedāntic ideal of society is not that of an aggregate of atomic individuals or of an organism, but that of a spiritual community of jīvas providing an opportunity for the gradual realisation of each self as an ātman and not as a thing. It starts with the economic end of the acquisition of wealth or artha for the welfare of all, and ascends to the hedonistic end of life as the disciplined satisfaction of desires or kāma, and then to the moral life of righteousness or dharma as contrasted with the assertion of rights. Ultimately it ends with the ideal of self-realisation as the goal of individual and social life. In such a spiritual community, the external goods have value only in so far as they promote the goods of the soul or spiritual welfare. The physical life of each man in terms of cosmic ethics is sustained by his appropriation of the goods of the world, secured from the five elements, his parents, his teachers and the gods, and a spiritual scheme of society consists in doing our duty to the cosmos and not in the assertion of exclusive rights. The ideal of the chief mas and yajñas is thus based on the consciousness of giving back to the universe what has been received from it. Though the nature of a man's duty may be determined psychologically by his station in life and svadharma, his ethical motive is deduced from the universal ideal of righteousness.

The social side of spiritual life is briefly illustrated in the institutions of warfare, private property and marriage. The ethics of evolution recognises and provides for differences in the development of moral and spiritual life due to the individual disposition and the environment of the evolving self. But the final spiritual ideal of the  $j\bar{\imath}va$  is the realisation of the inner worth of each self, the similarity of the attributive consciousness of all  $j\bar{\imath}vas$  and the solidarity of life in all the levels of the three-storeyed universe. The institution of warfare is inevitable in biological life on account of the assertion of the

pugnacious instinct, but is not essential. Its evil is minimised by the idea of dharma yuddha or righteous warfare confined to the Ksatriya who is qualified to fight without ill-will or egoism, for the establishment of the kingdom of righteousness with the deathless courage of a spiritual conviction that the self neither slays another nor is slain, and is eternal, and that it is the body alone that is subject to birth and death. This is a middle course between militarism and pacifism and eventually leads to the ethics of ahimsa and universal love. The institution of private property may be justified realistically as the organisation of the acquisitive instinct, which has its origin in the twin evils of ahankāra and mamakāra or the egoistic feelings of 'I' and 'mine.' But from the idealistic point of view, the theory of property is freed from the sense of possession, and wealth becomes a medium for developing the self and social unity. Riches alone may be hated but not the rich man who gets wealth for giving it to others. The institution of marriage serves as the ethical foundation for the unity of the family which is the training ground for the promotion of the virtue of universal brotherhood. It starts realistically as a response to a biological need, passes through the idealistic stage as an opportunity for fostering monogamous fidelity and selfless love, and finally it promotes the ideal of spiritual atone-ment. Fraternal love has full meaning only on the ethical and spiritual levels of life and not on the economic and the political. Thus the ultimate motive of all social institutions is the promotion of the unity of all jīvas as a realm of ends by removing the hindrances to such a consummation.

The experience of the spiritual unity of all jīvas is analysed by the author of the Gītā in his exposition of the nature of the ārūḍha in verses 29 to 32 of Chapter VI. Looking alike

on all things, the yogin who has intuited the atman sees the same self in all ivas owing to the similarity of their spiritual intelligence or dharmabhūtajñāna. It is only the bodily feeling caused by karma that creates the separatist consciousness and generates raga dvesa. But the seer who has atma drsti or soul-sight and sweet reasonableness or vinaya intuits the same ātman in a dog as in a god. In a higher stage, the yōgin has a glimpse of Paramātman, the Supreme Self, as the pervading identity in all jīvas, and sees Him in all beings and all beings in Him. In the next higher stage the spiritual experience of this unity consciousness is further enriched. The spiritual insight of ātmajñāna is completely acquired in the fourth stage by the exhibition of universal sympathy in which the *jñāni* realises the kinship of all *jīvas* and regards the joys and sorrows of others as his own.' Sympathy is not merely a feeling that impels the yogin, but is a spiritual motive that induces him to action. It overcomes the dualism between egoism and altruism, as the bodily consciousness that separates jīvas is transcended in the ārūdha state. It is deeper than the ideal of universal brotherhood, as it is an appeal to spiritual kinship without any taint of the individualistic consciousness. The monistic theory that abolishes individuality affords no scope for such social love, as it affirms absolute identity and not the unity or equality of all jīvas. If the yōgin loves his neighbour as himself on account of the identity between their two selves, there is no scope for brotherly love or benevolence. Vedāntic ethics from the Visistādvaitic standpoint demands not only self-knowledge by the removal of error but also self-denial by the destruction of egotism; it

sarva bhūta hite ratāḥ |—B.G., V. 25.
s'rūyatām dharma sarvasvam s'rutvācāpyavadhāryatām |
ātmanaḥ pratikūlāni pareṣām na samācaret |—Mahābhārata quoted in the Tātþaryacandrikā, V. 25.

therefore gives the deepest explanation of the philosophy of the spiritual and social self.

The true meaning of service as kainkarya may be summed up in this connection by contrasting it with the other theories of social ethics, secular as well as spiritual, which are advocated in the east and the west. All the theories agree in their opposition to egoism and self-centredness. The ideal of material progress like the prolongation of life and its pleasures, the democratic dissemination of secular knowledge and hedonistic views are based on the animal faith that physical wellbeing is more valuable than spiritual welfare. The utilitarian theory that insists on the greatest happiness of the greatest number is only a refined form of egoism as it is founded on enlightened self-love and prudence. Positivism goes a step further when it defines the religion of humanity as love and service to mankind as a whole in the collective and universal sense. But even this view is untenable as it is no satisfaction to the individual to know that, when humanity persists and progresses, he himself withers and perishes in the process. Communism also upholds the morality of collectivism in its attempt to establish a classless society on an economic basis, but it fails to recognise the intrinsic worth of personality and the higher values of life. Humanism remedies this defect when it stresses the dignity of man and the need for promoting social order; but when it prefers better-worldliness to otherworldliness it is a secular view and has no stability as betterworldliness is still a form of worldliness without any spiritual value. All these theories of social progress bring to light the difficulties of overcoming, from the secular standpoint, the dualism between egoism and altruism, individualism and socialism. A new orientation is given to the problem by the

Indian philosopher in his theories of karma and reincarnation and the need for the recognition of the kinship of all living beings as jīvas and for jīvakārunva. Buddhism and Jainism favour, more than any other religion, the ethics of ahimsa and jīvakārunya extended even to the sub-human species. But the positive motive for universal benevolence is lacking in both as the first denies human personality and the second has no use for divine personality. There are pragmatists in the west who cherish the will to believe in a personal but finite God fighting against evil with the active co-operation of man; but the will to believe is often a make-believe as a finite God is no God at all. The absolutists explain the need for benevolence or lokasangraha in terms of the identity philosophy revealed in the text "Thou art That" and justify neighbourly love on the ground that the neighbour and oneself are identical. Deussen who extols this philosophy, however, thinks that it is Christianity that brings out its moral side and expounds the meaning of social love. The question of brotherhood has no place in the identity philosophy and the idea of the Heavenly Father is too remote to bring out spiritual intimacy. The true meaning of brotherhood can be explained only by the Visistadvaitic teaching of the immanence of Brahman in all jīvas and their essential unity or similarity.

The spiritual philosophy of the ātman which refers to ātmāvalōkana or self-realization is different from the religion of God-realization attained by bhakti and prapatti. The philosopher who prefers the joy of kaivalya to the bliss of divine life is called a kevala. To him seeking God is only a means to his seeing the self. He seeks the spiritual freedom which arises from dissociation from

brakrti and also dependence on the cosmic ruler. The kevala is a contemplative who devotes himself to vogic introversion by withdrawing his mind from its outgoing tendencies. The atman is by nature immutable (aksara) and self-effulgent and is not to be identified with the embodied self. It is the goal of the kevala to intuit his self by abandoning the false and fleeting ideas of 'I' and 'mine', regain his essential and eternal nature and thus attain freedom from birth and death and the ills of samsāra. The state of kaivalva thus attained may be called the flight of 'the Alone to the Alone' in which the atman enjoys inner quiet and is self-satisfied. Soul-culture no doubt leads to sanity and peace or s'anti. But the quiet of kaivalya often leads to quietism and subjectivism and the godless state of Sānkhyan kaivalya and nirvāna. The kevala is stranded in solid singleness without the glow of godliness. His spiritual attainment is only the orison of quiet and not the orison of divine union and is at best a half-way house to the perfection of mukti. There is some difference of opinion among the Visistādvaitic philosophers regarding the value and destiny of the kevala. One school, that of the Tenkalais, maintains the view that kaivalya is not on the road to mukti but is mukti itself in which the mukta enjoys the 'peace that passeth understanding' but is only in the outskirts of Paramabada and has no hope of intuiting God and enjoying the bliss of communion. But the Vadakalai school favours the theory that the kevala is on the path to perfection and will eventually reach the divine goal. The path of devotion leads to God and not away from Him and the instinct which the kevala has for the infinite soon asserts itself and urges him to shed his sinfulness arising from self-satisfaction and self-alienation. He is on the right path in so far as he has discriminated between prakrti and purusa, freed himself from the shackles of prakrti and turned his attention Godward. The kevala is transformed into the  $j\bar{n}\bar{a}n\bar{\imath}$  that hungers for God and attains the bliss of immortal communion with Him. Thus, of the four types of devotees to God mentioned in the  $G\bar{\imath}t\bar{a}$ , the  $j\bar{n}\bar{a}n\bar{\imath}$  and the kevala return no more to the world of samsāra, while the other two who only long for the pleasures of this world and of svarga continue their career of births and deaths in samsāra, though they also attain freedom eventually. The spiritual consciousness of the kevala has its fruition only in religious consciousness.

The religious consciousness consists in shifting the centre of reference from the ātman to Paramātman, and this effects a revolution in our life, which is of far greater importance than the Copernican revolution. While the astronomer realises the littleness of the earth and the greatness of the sun that draws it to itself, the religious man or bhakta knows the emptiness of the earth-bound self and the saving might of God who is the source and centre of all living beings. The knowledge of the finite self has its religious fulfilment in the integral experience of the infinite, which is its ground and goal. Kaivalya is no doubt on the plane of mukti or on the path to it, but the satisfaction of ātmajñāna has little or no value when it is contrasted with the bliss of Brahman. The Gītā starts with the morals of niskāma karma and the philosophy of ātmajñāna and ends with the religious exposition of Bhakti Yōga as the highest state in the philosophy of religion. Bhakti Yōga is itself a disciplinary process involving different stages; but, in all its stages, it is dominated by the single aim of seeking Brahman as Bhagavān and seeing Him face to face.

<sup>1</sup> Rāmānuja's Gītā Bhāşya, VIII. 15.

Certain schools of monism begin with the subject of experience or self-consciousness as the starting point of philosophy and end in subjectivism. Bhakti Yōga does not thrive in the atmosphere of such subjectivism and solipsism. Subjectivism starts with sensationalism and ends with solipsism. But in all cases it denies extra-mental reality or an external world order. The existence of a thing is only in its mental experience. The first stage is the philosophy of subjective idealism which holds that esse is percipi or drsti is strsti. Matter is only mind-dependent and its primary and secondary qualities are only a cluster of sensations. In a higher stage called objective idealism, reality is said to be mental in the logical as opposed to the psychological sense; but even the logical idea of the object is not the object. In a still higher stage known as transcendental idealism, the world as constituted by space, time and causality is said to be 'my' idea. They are subjective forms of the intellect, which are presupposed in experience and not deduced from it. Absolute idealism goes a step further, when the whole of reality is made to rest in the 'I'. Reality is mindbegotten, mind-made and dissolved into the mind. The absolute 'I' falsely imagines itself to be the world. In this way, subjective idealism in all its later or more developed forms ends in solipsism, and cannot escape the charge of the ego-centric fallacy. This conclusion is confirmed by the monistic argument that truth is a passage from the objective to the subjective and that the realism of the waking state should lead to the truer state of the mentalism of the dream state. Cosmology is thus dissolved in epistemology and epistemology is dissolved in psychology, and the psychology of eka-iīva, the single-self theory, is the only view of truth. Visistādvaita repudiates this subjectivistic philosophy and its super-solipsism. and upholds the philosophy of the absolute as the self of the universe of cit and acit and their Lord who is the sarīrin. It reinterprets idealism in terms of personalism which deals with persons or puruṣas and their ideas and ideals and personalism in terms of supra-personalism dealing with the absolute as super-personal or Puruṣōttama. Bhakti shifts the centre from the 'I' to the 'Thou' or from the finite consciousness of the puruṣa to the consciousness of Puruṣōttama who is the world ground as well as the inner ruler. He is the eternal 'other', whether He is the internal or the external Self, and bhakti is the longing of the jīva as the sarīra to become one with its self or sarīrin and thus serve His ends.

### CHAPTER XV

### BHAKTI YŌGA

THE scheme of Karma Yōga, Jñāna Yōga and Bhakti Yoga marks the different stages in the progressive realisation of mukti. Caught up in the causal cycle of avidvakarma, the mumuksu at long last reflects on the waste of soul life and the perishing values of empirical life from the bare existence of the amoeba to the joys of Brahmaloka, and longs to go back to his home in the absolute. Karma Yoga is the path of disinterested duty illumined by the knowledge of the distinction between the eternal atman and the empirical ego of prakrti and the gradual renunciation of egoism or the conceit of ahankara and mamakara or the feeling of 'I' and 'mine'. Jñāna Yōga is the process of selfrealisation in which the self retires from the circumference to the centre, and regains its own state. But it is the orison of quiet, which may lapse into the pitfalls of quietism, and is not the supreme end of life, as it is a godless state of aloneless without the glow of love. Upāsana or bhakti is the unitive way in which the mumuksu sheds his egoism and ego-centric outlook, attunes himself to the will of God as Purusottama, and yearns for eternal communion with Him. It is therefore the consummation of moral and spiritual culture. Karma Yōga and Jñāna Yōga are means to mukti only through Bhakti Yōga. Bhakti Yōga is the direct pathway to perfection, as it leads to the very heart of the religious consciousness. The path to mukti is a progressive realisation of Brahman, and each Yōga is a stepping stone to a higher stage. The yōgin equipped with viveka or discrimination and vairāgya or self-renunciation gives up his egoism, realises his eternal nature as the ātman and gradually attains his home in the absolute or Brahman.

Though the ideal of every darsana is the attainment of mukti or freedom from the travails of samsāra, there are sharp differences of opinion amongst them in respect of the means employed to secure it. The chief views are explained by Rāmānuja with a view to proving how by mutual criticism they lend themselves to a reinterpretation in terms of bhakti as the chief means of mukti. The Mīmāmsaka insists on the primacy of the moral law of dharma and this conclusion may be shown to satisfy the tests of sruti, yukti and anubhava. Every Vedic proposition has a practical purpose, and action is its main import. The performance of dharma for its own sake as in the case of nitya-karmas is the highest ideal of con-When the *Upanisad* extols knowledge, it sets forth the true nature of the active self alone, and knowledge is only auxiliary to action. Every state of consciousness is conational; and even introspective insight is only an ideo-motor action, and thus there is action even in apparent inaction. It is well known that Janaka who was a knower of Brahman, preferred the active life to the contemplative. Thus the Mīmāmsaka proves his conclusion that the performance of Vedic duty is the only end of conduct.

The Advaitin goes to the other extreme when he refers to jñāna as the only means to mukti. Mukti to him is the direct

cognition of Brahman as the eternal, changeless and ever selfrealised, and it is not therefore due to the intervention of any Vedic injunction. While the Karma Kānda sets forth the truth of difference or bheda, the Jñana Kanda affirms the reality of non-difference or abheda, and jñāna and karma are contradictory. In the light of scripture, the Advaitin concludes that karma is the effect of avidyā and jñāna is the cessation of avidyā and karma. For example, the moment the rope is cognised as such, the illusion that it is a snake is dispelled. Brahman, being eternally self-realised, cannot be originated, attained or modified. As the thinker of thought Brahman cannot be the object of knowledge or objectified. The Dhyāna-niyōga-vādin accepts the Advaita contention, but objects to its conclusion that knowledge is immediate and not a process of knowing. Brahma-iñāna is a real progression in knowledge involving the different stages of dhyāna or meditation as enjoined in the sruti. In the example of the rope-snake illusion, disillusionment arises not from the bare cognition of the rope, but from actual ocular verification. The Vedāntic imperative that Brahman should be reflected upon and realised has more value than the Vedic law of duty, as it directly leads to mukti. By following the Mīmāmsaka principle of niyoga and the Vedāntic rule of meditation, the Dhyāna-niyōga-vādin gradually gives up the sense of plurality and intuits the self-identity of Brahman in the end. The allied theory of nisprapañcīkaraṇa-niyōga defines mukti acosmically as the knowledge of Brahman by the destruction of the world order. But the theory of nivoga as an unseen external agency has already been shown to be mechanical and meaningless. The view that Advaita negates the world order was proved to be untenable as Advaita destroys only the sense of separateness and not the world itself. These two views of niyoga which try to combine the philosophy of

Advaita with the ethics of Mīmāmsa are neither philosophical nor ethical. The Bhedābhedavādin steps in at this stage and tries to reconcile the counter-claims of karma and iñana by his theory of jñāna-karma-samuccaya as the only way to mukti. He accepts the equal validity and value of the method of iñana or contemplative insight and karma or moral endeavour. The iīva suffers from the errors and evils of avidvā-karma and the only way of overcoming these barriers lies in the co-ordination of iñana and karma. Iñana is the continuous meditation on the abheda aspect of Brahman and karma is rationalised as niskāma karma and then spiritualised as Brahmārbana. Jñāna gives a meaning to moral endeavour, and karma furnishes the dynamic side of spiritual insight. In this way the mumuksu avoids the pitfalls of the Vedic ritualism of the Mīmāmsaka and the illusionism of Māyāvāda and utilises the highest values of moral and spiritual life in the meditational process. But its chief defect lies, as has been frequently pointed out before. in the attribution of imperfections to Brahman.

Visiṣṭādvaita steers clear of the fallacies of the Mīmām-saka on the one hand and of the schools of monism on the other, as it accepts the reality of experience in all its levels and the relative values of the moral and metaphysical disciplines detailed in the Karma Kāṇḍa and the Jñāna Kāṇḍa. Pūrva Mīmāmsa and Uttara Mīmāmsa are integrally related as one S'ārīraka S'āstra, and there is continuity and unity in the two parts, which are the distinguishable elements of a systematic whole. The monistic view that the sāstra affirms the self-contradiction between karma, upāsana and jñāna finally negates negation, and is itself sublated by the self-identity of Brahman. It tends to destroy scriptural faith and faith in reason itself, and every moral and spiritual endeavour

is shipwrecked at the very entrance to the absolutist haven. The only escape from such all-destroying scepticism lies in abandoning the dangers of the pan-illusion theory and following the safe path of affirmation enshrined in the truth that Vāsudeva pervades all things and thinkers as the sarīrin or inner self. The wisdom of Vedānta is the natural completion of Vedic knowledge and is not its cancellation, and from the first Sūtra of the Karma Mīmāmsa beginning with the ethical enquiry into dharma to the last Sūtra in the Brahma Mīmāmsa ending with the entry of the self into the eternal bliss of Brahman, from which there is no return, the scripture describes with meticulous accuracy the different mile-stones in the spiritual progress of the jīva. There is thus a real transition, logical as well as chronological, from the Pūrva Mīmāmsa to the Uttara Mīmāmsa and the Mīmāmsaka is transfigured into a mumuksu, when he realises that the value of karma is transitory and transient and that of iñana is eternal and infinite. Every judgment, Vedic and Vedāntic, has a certain relevancy or specific end. The former stresses the end of conduct as the attainment of Svarga, while the latter refers to the attainment of apavarga or Moksa as the supreme end of life. The moral imperative or 'ought' has its religious foundation in the knowledge of Brahman and thus involves a deeper 'is'. The facts of sense-perception, which are out there and the acts of moral life, which aim at the 'ought', lead to the religious experience of Brahman which is more valuable than the things of brakrti which are affirmed, and the imperatives of dharma which are enjoined. To the mumuksu, every judgment ultimately connotes the whole of reality as Brahman, and his whole life is dedicated to the meditation on Brahman as his very Self. Meditation deepens into bhakti and it is the practice of bhakti that becomes the direct pathway to Brahman. The entire body of the Vedānta Sūtras dealing with the nature of Brahman and the means of attaining Him is opposed to the Advaitic distinction between a lower and a higher knowledge of Brahman or apara vidyā and para vidyā, the former dealing with the meditation on saguņa Brahman or the absolute in an empirical dress, which is a concession to the avidyā-ridden mind, and the latter affirming the self-identity of the absolute, which is directly intuited and not attained. The Vedānta Sūtras, which form a systematic exposition of the Upanisads, begin with the definition of Brahman as the ground of all existent beings and end with the description of the eternal 2 bliss of true mukti, which is the summum bonum of religious endeavour. The Advaitic contention that the beginning or upakrama and the end or upasamhāra of the whole philosophy refer only to the exoteric doctrine of the lower Brahman and lower knowledge is not only a violation of the rules of Vedic interpretation, but is a serious charge against the integrity of the Sūtrakāra, the recognised expositor of the system of Vedānta. The modern view of the critical philosopher that the Sūtras and the Gītā support Rāmānuja and that S'ankara faithfully represents the monism of the Upanisads does no justice either to Rāmānuja, whose dialectic criticism of Advaita in the form of saptavidha anupapatti is unsurpassed, nor to the heart of S'ankara, the immortal author of "Bhaja Govindam", who is more a Brahmavādin than a Māyāvādin. Besides, this method of speculation may cut both ways and lead nowhere. Some say that the Upanisads are mere guesses at truth and do not constitute a systematic whole; others hold that they teach divergent doctrines, and still others seek their support in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> janmādyasya yatah—V. S., I. i. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> na ca punarāvartate na ca punarāvartate.—V. S., IV. iv. 22.

justification of their siddhānta. It is therefore safe to follow the traditional view upheld by all ācāryas that the scriptural authority of the Upaniṣads (implying the oneness of all the S'ākhas), the Sūtras and the Gītā is an integral unity, and the validity of a system depends on its coherence with the whole sāstra and its drift and spirit. Visiṣtādvaita, as a systematic and self-contained philosophy of religion, sees no difference between the absolute of philosophy and the God of religion, and reconciles the claims of logic with the needs of religious feeling. Brahman is the very heart of logic, and satsifies the logic of the heart, and there is really no paradox in this statement.

Brahman is one, and is the goal of the different upāsanas.1 The historical view that Bhakti Yoga is the result of the fusion of the orthodox teachings of Brahmopāsana with the non-Vedic teaching of the Pancaratra that Bhagavan is the Supreme Self, and with the later theory of the avatārs in which heroes are deified, is a strange assumption, which is not really historical at all. History deals with facts given in sense perception and religion with super-sensuous truths. History therefore oversteps its bounds, when it refers to spiritual truths, which can only be discerned and described spiritually. Besides, such conclusions arrived at by historians are merely stories coloured by presuppositions and prejudices of the historian turned religious thinker. It is a more scientific conclusion to reject the whole religious thesis than to pull it to pieces and then to piece them together. It is the supreme merit of Visistādvaita that it follows the logic of religious intuition, and concludes that the Brahman of the Upanisads and the Sūtras, the Vāsudeva of the Gītā, the Bhagavān of the Pāñcarātra and the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., III. iii. 1 to 4, S.B.E., XLVIII, pp. 629 to 632.

arca of the Ālvārs connote the same Supreme Self, and insists on Bhakti Yōga as the direct means of knowing Brahman. It is untenable to say that philosophers, who have Stoic equanimity and who shy at sentimentalism, accept the nirguna Brahman of S'ankara and allow saguna Brahman, which is less than the absolute, to accommodate the mass mind or average intelligence. This dual standpoint is admittedly a learned error or true lie and it freezes the heart, misses the delights of devotion, and dries up the springs of sympathy and love. But Visiṣṭādvaita meets the demands of metaphysics, and satisfies the supreme call of love by its theory of bhaktirupapanna jñāna or jñāna turned bhakti.

The practice of bhakti presupposes certain elaborate disciplines, which include not only the sublimation of feeling but also the training of the intellect and the will. They are known as the sadhana saptaka or the sevenfold moral and spiritual discipline, contrasted with the sādhana catustaya or the fourfold discipline of Advaita. The Advaitic sādhana also consists of the triple discipline of thought, feeling and will, defined as viveka, vairāgya and the disciplines of sama, dama and the rest. But, strictly speaking, Advaitic sādhana is self-discrepant, as its idea of mukti is the cessation of avidvā or the sense of plurality and not a progressive attainment. Jñāna is the sublation of ajñāna, and there can be no degrees and stages in denying the false. The opening sentences in the two Sūtra Bhāsyas strike the key note of their Vedāntic theory. S'ankara defines the aim of the S'ārīraka Mīmāmsa as the knowledge of the identity of Brahman by the removal of adhyāsa or the illusion arising from the super-imposition of the nature of Brahman on non-Brahman. Brahmajñāna is immediate as Brahman is ever self-realised. The opening sentence of Rāmānuja's  $S'r\bar{\imath}$   $Bh\bar{a}sya$  reveals the contrast: "May my buddhi or  $j\bar{n}\bar{a}na$  blossom into bhakti or devotion to Brahman or  $S'r\bar{\imath}$ nivāsa whose nature is revealed in the Upanisad as the self, that, out of the  $l\bar{\imath}l\bar{a}$  or sport of love, creates, sustains and reabsorbs the whole bhuvana or universe with a view to saving the  $j\bar{\imath}vas$  that seek His love." Brahman as the  $sar\bar{\imath}rin$  of the  $j\bar{\imath}va$  is the  $pr\bar{a}paka$  as well as the  $pr\bar{a}pya$ , the endeavour as well as the end, and the scheme of  $s\bar{a}dhana$  saptaka is helpful in the building up of bhakti.

The seven  $s\bar{a}dhanas^{\dagger}$  to  $up\bar{a}sana$  or bhakti are ennumerated and explained by the  $V\bar{a}kyah\bar{a}ra$  as viveka,  $vim\bar{o}ka$ ,  $abhy\bar{a}sa$ ,  $kriy\bar{a}$ ,  $kaly\bar{a}na$ ,  $anavas\bar{a}da$  and  $anuddharsa.^2$  Viveka is the purification of the body or  $k\bar{a}ya$  suddhi by means of  $s\bar{a}tvic$  food. The body is Brahmapuri or a living temple of God, and as cleanliness is a help to godliness, bodily purity is prescribed as necessary for purity of mind, or satva suddhi which leads to spiritual concentration or dhruva  $smrti.^3$   $Vim\bar{o}ka^4$  is freedom from the circle of  $k\bar{a}ma$  and  $kr\bar{o}dha$ , and this mental detachment is essential to the meditation on  $Brahman.^5$   $Abhy\bar{a}sa^6$  follows from bodily purity and mental calmness and means the continuous practice of the presence of the indwelling Self, so that the mind may be  $Brahmanised^7$   $(tadbh\bar{a}va$   $bh\bar{a}vita$ ). The practice

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B. I. i. i p. 11 and S.B.E. XLVIII, p. 17.

² tallabdhir vivekavimõkäbhyāsa kriyā kalyānānavasādānuddharşebhyas sambhavān nirvacanācca l—Būdhāyanāvṛtti.

 $<sup>^8</sup>$ āhāra s'uddhau satva s'uddhiḥ satvas'uddhau dhruvā smṛtih.— $Chh.\ Up.,$  VII. xxvi. 2

<sup>4</sup> vimokah kamanabhisvangah |-Bodh. Vriti.

<sup>5</sup> s'ānta upāsīta !-Chh. Up.-III. xiv. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> ārambhaṇasams'īlanam punaḥ punar abhyāsah l—Bōdh. Vṛtti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> B. G., VIII. 6.

of such introversion does not free the upāsaka from his moral obligation to others and the next sadhana known as krivā is the performance of the fivefold duties according to one's ability, as such moral obligations develop into a meditation on God. The mumuksu seeks to know Brahman by Vedic recitation, sacrifice, benevolence and tabas.2 Krivā is the fivefold duty to the sub-human species, human society, the guru, the forefathers and the gods, as the right to life, wellbeing and education involves the corresponding obligation to the universe from which the aspirant derives his psychophysical existence. Like the horse that requires grooming by the attendant before it is set for riding, upasana needs the performance of duties as a means of purification. While krivā is overt action or duty, kalyāna is the practice of virtue as the inner side of duty, and it consists of satya or truthfulness, ārjava or integrity, or purity of thought, word and deed, dayā or compassion, dāna or benevolence and ahimsā or nonviolence. The next sādhana is anavasāda or freedom from despair due to disappointment, remembrance of past sorrows, and horrible imaginings. Anuddharsa is the absence of exaltation and is a mean between the two extremes of excessive joy or atisantōṣa and absence of joy or asantōṣa. Good and evil actions are the result of karma, and niskāma karma is duty emptied of the subjective inclinations and objective ideas of utility. The meditation on Brahman finally frees the jīva from

¹ pañcamahāyagñādyanuṣṭhānam s'aktitah kriyā — Bōdh. Vṛtti. kriyāvāneṣa brahmavidām variṣthah — Mund. Up., III. i. iv.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Br. Up., VI. iv. 22

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  satyārjavadayā dānāhimsānabhidhyāh kalyāṇāni.— $B\bar{o}dh$ . Vrtti.

<sup>4</sup> satyena labhyah |-Mund. Up., III. i. 5. yeşām tapō brahmacaryam yeşu satyam pratis thitam teşāmasau virajōbrahmalōkah na yeşu jihmam anrtam na māyā ceti.—Prasna Up., I. xv. 16.

desakālavaiguņyāt s'okavastvādyanū-smṛtes'ca tajjam dainyam abhāsvara tvam manasaḥ anavasādaḥ tadviparyayajā tuṣṭiḥ uddharṣaḥ—Bōdh. Vṛtti.

karma with its causal chains of punya resulting from good deeds and  $p\bar{a}pa$ . The chief aim of the seven  $s\bar{a}dhanas$  is the practice of moral and spiritual discipline by the harmonious development of thought, feeling and will, which are partial expressions of the attributive consciousness of the meditating devotee.

Equipped with these disciplines, the upāsaka enters on the life of meditation, and cultivates the love of God. Ubāsana is a divine command like the performance of dharma, but while the Vedic 'ought' is of the form 'Do your duty without caring for the consequences,' the Vedāntic 'ought' is of the form 'Know the deity that is your self.' Of the three Upanisadic injunctions of sravana, or hearing, manana or reflection and nidhidhyāsana or meditation, the first two naturally lead to the third, and dhyāna is the only divine command; sravana and manana as the apperception of scriptural terms and the assimilation thereof by reflection have no value unless they deepen into dhyāna. It is by absolute devotion to God and not by Vedic study, meritorious work or austerity that Brahman is realised.1 The knowledge of Brahman is not academic or speculative, but is a spiritual intuition which transcends grammatical and logical thinking.2 The term vedana in the text: 'Brahmavid āpnōti param' or one who knows Brahman attains the highest, connotes dhyana or meditation which deepens into upāsana or devotion or worship.3 Upāsana is the practice of the presence of the ātman, and admits of the three stages of firm meditation or dhruvānusmrti, repetition or asakrdāvrtti and the orison of union or darsana

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> nāyamātmā pravacanena labhyō na medhayā na bahunā s'rutena l—Kath. Up., I. ii. 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Taitt. Up., Ananda Valli, I. i. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> S.B., I. i. 1. p. 9 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 16.

samānākāratā. The first is not mere remembrance in the psychological sense, but a spiritual quest to gather together and get a glimpse of a prenatal experience of Brahman, as the ātman is a trailing cloud of glory, which has its home in the absolute. Every cognition of Brahman is a recognition of the inner self of the upāsaka, and is a recollection of the a priori idea of God as an archetype. Dhyāna is a continuous process of mental concentration, or ekāgracittatā, on the nature and form of Brahman, which is practised daily till the moment of death or dissolution of the body. Dhyana as upasana is a ceaseless remembrance of the Lord, which is likened to the uninterrupted flow of oil (tailadhārāvat aviccinna smṛtisantāna-rūþa).2 It is the process of focussing the mind on Brahman in a proper environment. For this the aspirant is recommended to choose the proper place and time and to adopt the sitting posture, which is most conducive to dhyāna, as standing and walking involve effort, and lying down favours sleep and slothfulness. The eight stages of yoga are specially designed to draw the mind from its outgoing tendency and dispersal, to subdue its vāsanās and to centre it in samādhi. Astānga Yōga or the eightfold yōga is thus not only essential to the attainment of Sānkhyan kaivalya or the realisation of the ātman but also to Brahmōpāsana. As bondage is a descent to the world of samsāra, mukti is the process of retracing the steps and returning to the spiritual home in God, and the whole scheme of upāsana is governed by this central concept. Upāsana deepens into bhakti, when recollection acquires by practice the clearness and distinctness of a direct perception

¹ s'ucau dese pratisthāpya sthiramāsanamātmanaḥ nātyucchritam nātinīcam celājinakus'ottaram ll tatraikāgram manah kṛtvā yatacittendriyakriyaḥ upavis'yāsane yuñjyād yōgam ātmavis'uddhaye ll —B.G., VI. 11 and 12 and S.B., IV. i. 1 to 12 and S.B.E., XLVIII, pp. 715 to 721.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S.B., I. i. 1. p. 9 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 14.

of the beatific form of Paramātman or the Supreme Self (darsana samānākāra). Imagination in the aesthetic sense is not merely creative imagination, but is a vision and faculty divine, which becomes as vivid as the soul sight of Bhagavān.

The exact meaning of Brahmopāsana as expounded by Rāmānuja can now be ascertained by distinguishing it from the concepts employed by Dvaita and Advaita. The Dvaita Darsana expounds the living faith in the infinite will of Isvara as contrasted with the infinitesimal nature of the ivva and the feeling of the absolute dependence of the jīva on His mercy. Advaita denies externality and otherness, and affirms the absolute identity of jīva and Īsvara by eliminating distinction and difference. The meditation on Brahman as the Self or s'arīrin of the meditating devotee is opposed to externality as well as identity, and is deduced from the idea that *Isyara* is not only with us, but is in us as the Inner Ruler Immortal. The Upanisad in its classical exposition of Brahman as antaryāmin defines His nature, immanence and intimacy in the following terms: "He who, dwelling within the self, is different from the self, whom the self does not know, of whom the self is the body, who rules the self from within. He is thy Self, the Inner Ruler Immortal." 1 The upāsaka turns his vision inward, and thinks himself into the antaryamin in the form: "I am indeed Thou, holy divinity, and Thou art my self." In the ordinary judgment 'I am a man' the term connoting the sarīra connotes the sarīrin; likewise in the Upanisadic affirmation 'I am Thou', the term connoting the jīva connotes ultimately Brahman, of which it is the body.

 $<sup>^1</sup>$ ya ātmani tiṣṭhan ātman<br/>ōntaraḥ yam ātmā na veda yasya ātmā s'arīram ya atmānam antarō yamayati<br/>— $B_T.\ Up$ ., V. vii, 22 (Mādhyandina reading)

 $<sup>^2</sup>$ tvam vā aham asmi bhagavō devate aham vai tvam asi bhagavō devate tad yōham sōsau yōsau sōham asmi.

Brahman is the source and sustenance of the jīva, and the latter exists for His satisfaction. Brahmōpāsana is changed into Brahmabhāva, in which the finite self is infinitised and invested with the quality of Brahman. The converse, that the infinite should be finitised and given an anthropomorphic form, is not desirable. Identification with the self should not be mistaken as identity with it, as the self is more than the jīva or adhika but is not anya, i.e., externally related to it. Vāsudeva is in all beings, but is not all beings. He is the life of our life, nearer to the self than it is to itself. This upāsana promotes spiritual intimacy and the unitive consciousness.

There are thirty-two varieties of Brahma Vidyā described in the Upanisads for securing moksa and the Sūtras, as a systematic exposition of the upāsanas, bring to light their philosophic meaning and religious aim, and conclude that the only subject of enquiry in all the Vidyās is Brahman and not prakrti or jīva, and their only object is the meditation on Brahman to attain mukti, and not the hedonistic enjoyment of worldly and other-worldly pleasures.3 Among the chief Vidyās may be mentioned the Bhūma Vidyā, the Sad Vidyā, the Antaryāmi Vidyā, the Antarāditya Vidyā, the Ānandamaya Vidyā, the Madhu Vidyā, the Dahara Vidyā, the Maitreyī Vidyā, the Nyāsa Vidyā and the Paryanka Vidyā. The first defines the true nature of the mumuksu as a seeker after Brahman or the bhūman, the true infinite. The next six Vidvās are mainly devoted to the metaphysical meditation on Brahman as the absolute that has satyam, jñānam, anantam, ānanda

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., IV. i. 4 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 719.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> adhikam tu bhedanirdes'āt.—V.S., II. i. 22. tadananyatvam ārambhaņas'abdādibhyah.—V.S., II. i. 15.

<sup>3</sup> S.B., III. iii. 1 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 629.

and amalatvam. In the Antarāditya Vidyā the Supreme Self is meditated upon as having a beauteous form of His own as bhuvana sundara. The next two Vidyās insist on bhakti and brabatti or self-surrender as the chief means of attaining Brahman, and the last Vidyā brings out the nature of mukti itself. The Sad Vidyā (Chān. Up., VI. ii. 1) defines Brahman as the sat without a second and the true of the true, and this knowledge is determinate and not indeterminate. The apprehension of the being of Brahman cannot be separated from the comprehension of its nature or guna. The Antaryāmi Vidyā (Brha. Up., V. vii. 4) explicitly equates the sat with the inner self of all beings and the super-subject or light of lights. The Taittirīva Ubanisad further defines Brahman as the infinitely blissful. The Aksara Vidyā (Mundaka Up., I. i. 5-6) stresses the imperishable quality of the infinite. The Dahara Vidyā (Chān. Ub., VIII. i. 1) extols the infinite that seeks the interior of the heart of all beings as the infinitesimal to satisfy the devotional ends of the upāsaka or devotee. The Paryanka Vidyā of the Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad visualises by sense symbolism the transcendental realm of Brahman by attaining which everything else is attained. Each of the thirty-two Vidyās has its own specific character determined by the condition of its subject-matter or prakriya, name or nāmadheya, quality or guna, number or sankhya and repetition or abhyāsa.1 Though the starting points and the procedure vary with the psychological temperament and training of the adhikārin, the ultimate goal is the attainment of Brahman. What is ascertained from all the Vedāntic texts is the truth of the unity of the Vidvās on account of the non-difference of the result. As Brahman is the identical subject of all specific meditations. the contemplation of one essential quality comprises other

<sup>1</sup> S.B., III. iii. 56 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 679.

qualities as well.¹ Every essential quality of Brahman connotes other qualities of Brahman as well, owing to their apṛthaksiddha viseṣana or organic inseparability and identity of content. Brahman is saguna with the metaphysical and moral perfections of satyam, jñānam, anantam, amalatvam and ānanda as His differentia; and with the other kalyāṇa or auspicious guṇas derived from the essential qualities. Meditation on one quality of Brahman implies meditation on the other essential qualities. But each is complete in itself and has as its aim the attainment of Brahman. Owing to the differences in the psychological dispositions of the adhikārin and the ultimate unity of the result, the Upaniṣads provide option to each upāsaka to choose his own vidyā.²

In the building up of Brahmopāsana as an act of meditation as in all other actions, there are five component factors of which the chief is the will of Isvara. The upāsaka has to renounce the false views of materialism and monadism that the deha or body as the adhistana or support and the atman as karta or the doer are the real subjects of moral and religious practices and to realise that the supreme actor is Paramātman, the inner Ruler of all beings and Paramasesi. Isvara resides in the hearts of all beings after moulding their bodies out of matter and moving them to act according to their gunas. As the righteous Ruler of the universe, He dispenses justice according to the karma of the individual without any caprice or cruelty. When the moral self becomes a mumuksu. he recognises the redemptive will of the sesi, and effaces his egoism in service. The s'esa does not live unto himself but unto the sesi. The jīva, as materialist or sensualist, seeks the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., III. iii. 13 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 638.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S.B., III. iii. 57 and S.B.E., XLVIII, p. 681.

goods of life, but when he turns into a worshipper of God, he prays to the Giver of all good or Providence for the boons of life, and the sweets of life are then bestowed on him and the bitters are removed. The jīva then ascends to a higher stage when he prays to Isvara for the boon of ātmāvalōkana and then he intuits his atman. The mumuksu does not bargain with Providence for the pleasures of this life or of Svarga, nor does he seek the philosophic delight of self-knowledge or kaivalya, but meditates on Vāsudeva as his real self, and utilises his spiritual freedom for the service of the sesi. The karma yōgin who does his duty in a disinterested way becomes a iñana yōgin, who prefers self-knowledge to activity, and is transformed into a devotee, to whom karma is not niskāma or akāma, but is kainkarya or consecrated service. The offerings to the devas like Agni, Indra and Vayu are really dedicated to the Devadeva or the God of gods, who is their inner ruler: and therefore every Vedic work is really the Vedāntic worship of the supreme sesi. Isvara, the bestower of boons according to karma, transforms Himself into the redeemer or the bestower of mōkṣa. Thus the fruit of upāsana is not earned by merit alone but by the redemptive mercy of the raksaka or saviour. The Lord accepts the flower of devotion more than the flower offerings of outer devotion and it is the eight-petalled flower of ahimsa, kindness, patience, truth, self-control, tapas, inwardness and jñāna.1

When Brahmajijñāsa or the philosophic enquiry into Brahman develops into Brahmōpāsana or the ceaseless

¹ ahimsā prathamam puṣpam puṣpam indriyanigrahaḥ l sarvabhūtadayā puṣpam kṣamā puṣpam vis'eṣataḥ ll jñānam puṣpam tapah puṣpam dhyānam puṣpam taṭhaiva ca l satyam aṣṭhavidham puṣpam viṣṇōḥ prītikaram bhavet ll

<sup>-</sup>Vātsya Varadācārya's Prapanna Pārijāta, V. 29-29.

meditation on His nature, self-effort is transfigured into selfgiving and the saving faith in the grace of God. Mohsa, as expounded in the philosophy of fruition, is not attained by mere moral and spiritual discipline. The real value of the practice of niṣkāma karma and ceaseless dhyāna lies in the recognition of the shortcomings of human endeavour and the reliance on divine grace as the only means to mukti. The Advaitic view that the knowledge of Brahman is not conditioned by the empirical distinction between endeavour and end, but is ever self-realised by the metaphysical atman and that the seeking of divine grace is a concession to the theological faith of the phenomenal ego caught up in the sphere of causality, uproots the very foundations of the Brahma Vidyā, and the reality of the progression from the stage of sādhana or means to sādhya or end. If the idea of mukti as liberation through grace be the result of exoteric personification, the fact of mumuksutva and the seeking of the grace of the guru would itself become illusory. But every school of Vedānta insists on its practical aspect, namely, the necessity of the guru-sisya relation and the absolute faith of the sisya in attaining moksa through guru-prasāda or the favour of the guru. Identity philosophers like Deussen, who admire the equational view of the ātman and Brahman as the philosophy of all time from which no deviation is possible, are constrained to admit that there is no satisfactory solution to the question of finding in the esoteric system what corresponds to the grace of God and that it is a deviation from the logical structure of Advaita to treat of the sādhanas, which refer to both the exoteric and the esoteric Brahman. Deussen is therefore inclined to think that Christianity completes the Vedāntic view, whose fundamental want is the renewal of the will and freeing it from the realm of sin. That integration is, however, fully effected by Rāmānuja.

While Advaitic monism, according to him, demands identity by the destruction of avidyā or error, Christianity demands self-denial and love by the destruction of egoism and sin. Monism is as far removed from the religion of love, which defines salvation as the transformation of will, as Christianity is different from the Advaitic view, which defines mukti as the transformation of thought, and it is only Visisṭādvaita, that enjoins the conquest of avidyā and karma by the scheme of bhaktirūpāpanna jūāna or knowledge developed into devotion or bhakti, which defines mukti as liberation through the saving grace of God. The Upaniṣadic statement is clear and conclusive. It is not by study or reflection that Brahman is realised. "Whom He chooses, unto him He reveals Himself".

Thus the term vedana in the Upaniṣad text "Brahma vid āpnōti param" deepens into steady meditation or upāsana, which is a recollection of our divine home, and when it becomes one-pointed and intense, it acquires the vividness of immediate presentation or pratyakṣatā. Representation then has the sensory vividness of a presentation or direct intuition. The archetypal idea of God is revived by means of frequent and intense association and reinstated by the dominant emotion of bhakti. Then the succession of the thoughts of God develops by interest and intensity into simultaneity, and what is mediate thought becomes immediate or felt. What is smṛti-santāna-rūpa or of the nature of a stream of remembrances changes into darsana samānākāra or the likeness of direct intuition. When the idea of God as seṣī is clear and distinct and the religious emotion is disciplined, upāsana has its fruition in bhakti.

Bhakti is meditation on Brahman touched with love or prīti. It is absolute devotion to Bhagavān as the life of our

life, and is love for love's sake. The true bhakta is the true iñānī, as he knows that Bhagavān alone is the source and satisfaction of life.1 So he lives and has his being in the divine love. The Lord of love seeks the jñānī and sees him as His very life and self.2 Thus the jīva who, as the prakāra of Brahman, seeks the prakarin, is now sought by Brahman and loved as His prakārin. The true jñānī does not meditate on himself or do svasvarūba anusandhāna. He meditates on the Self of his self and thus transforms himself into a bhakta, who loves Bhagavān as his very life and rejects mukti itself, if it is devoid of divine life. To him the Muktipada of the Sūtras is transfigured into a Bhaktibāda. The essentials of bhakti are thus constituted by the ideas of absoluteness, reciprocity and unconditionality. The supreme value of bhakti is the accessibility of the Lord to His bhakta and adaptability to his devotional needs. Brahman, the transcendental one without a second, is overpowered by His dayā or compassion and enters into the heart of humanity or jīva-lōka and incarnates in any form to satisfy the needs of love and bhakti. In the light of this sacred truth or rahasya, it is untenable to say that the philosophic upasanas of the Upanisad have been erroneously adapted by Rāmānuja to the theistic needs of the Gītā and the emotional requirements of the Pāncarātra, and that Brahman in Visistādvaita becomes Bhagavān or the anthropomorphic highest and the avatāra or uttama purusa or pattern of human evolution. The ideas of antaryāmin and avatāra are not the phenomenalised forms of Brahman, but are the manifestation of divine love. The true joy of bhakti is in the building up by the jīva of a sopāna or ladder from the earth to Paramapada or the eternal abode and the descent of

<sup>1</sup> B.G., VII. 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> B.G., VII. 17 and 18.

Brahman from Paramapada to Ksīrābdhi and from Ksīrābdhi to the realms of immanence and incarnation. Love ignores inequality of status and function. While Isvara tries to shed His Isvaratva to become one with the jīva, the beloved, the bhakta sheds his avidyā and karma and communes with the Lord. Bhakti is not aware of the barriers of distance and the fear arising from the sinfulness of sin contrasted with the holiness of the Holv. Bhakti is for the sake of bhakti and has its fruition in absolute self-surrender to Bhagavān as the ubāva or means and the ubeva or end. The Gītā, as the crown of Upanisadic teaching, affords spiritual insight into the nature of Brahman or Bhagavān as S'rī Krsna, who is the supreme tatva or truth, the real hita or means and the purusartha or aim of human effort. According to the Gītārtha Sangraha of Yāmunācārya the Gītā consists of three satkas or sections of six chapters each, which throw light on the path from sensuality to spirituality and from spirituality to bhakti. The first satka defines the nature of Karma Yoga and Jñāna Yoga as the limbs of atmavalokana or intuition of the atman as a means to Bhakti Yoga; the second extols bhakti as the supreme means to mukti, and the last sums up the whole truth, and insists on absolute self-surrender to the Lord as the only way of redemption. The second chapter expounds the eternity of the atman and the ethics of niskama karma or disinterested action, and thus correlates Sānkhyan knowledge and yogic conduct. The third chapter defines niskama karma negatively as the result of the interaction of the gunas and positively as consecrated service to Bhagavān. The fourth reveals the jñāna aspect of karma and the true nature of avatāra or incarnation. The fifth stresses the ease and expeditiousness of Karma Yoga and the meaning of samadarsana; the sixth chapter explains the nature of atmavalokana as the

fulfilment of the two Yogas. The middle satka explains and extols the nature of Bhagavān as the Supreme Self, and Bhakti Yoga as the most efficacious means of knowing Him and attaining mukti. The seventh chapter classifies bhaktas into four types, namely, ārta, jijnāsu, aisvaryārthī and jnānī or the man in affliction, the man who seeks self-knowledge, the man who seeks worldly goods and the wise man, and assigns the highest place to the iñānī who seeks God alone as his ātman and who is sought by God as His very life. The eighth chapter analyses the motives and ends of the different seekers of God. The ninth brings to light the transcendental character of the avatāras and the essentials of bhakti. The tenth expatiates on the infinity of perfections or kalyana gunas of Brahman with a view to awaken the true devotional consciousness of the bhakta. The eleventh describes with epic sublimity the cosmic glory or vibhūti of Bhagavān as experienced by Arjuna who was given the 'vision and faculty divine'. The twelfth chapter states the supreme value of bhakti, and indicates the diverse ways of practising it according to the psychological requirements of the adhikārī. The last satka sums up the central aim of the  $G\bar{\imath}t\bar{a}$  and rounds off with the truth that absolute self-surrender is the one and only way to redemption. The thirteenth chapter distinguishes between the body as ksetra or field and the ātman as ksetrajña or the dweller in the field, and points out the means of freeing oneself from the bondage of embodiment or samsāra. The fourteenth traces the cause of bondage to the interaction of the three gunas with a view to securing the disillusionment of the ātman. The fifteenth chapter points to Purusottama as higher than the highest of the jīvas, known as the aksara or freed self. The sixteenth defines the divine type of the  $j\bar{v}a$  as the supreme seeker after Bhagavān and the seventeenth analyses the

psychological distinctions of conduct as determined by the gunas with a view to defining duty as a divine command. The last chapter insists on saranāgati or surrender to the Lord as the supreme means of mōkṣa.

When meditation or upāsana as a divine command deepens into innate and intense love or prema, bhakti becomes its own end marked by fidelity and fervour and is called pāramaikāntya. The building up of bhakti by Karma Yōga and Jñāna Yōga develops into paramaikānta prīti or definitely determined love to Bhagavān as the ādhāra, niyantā and s'eṣī. There is no other Bhagavān than Bhagavān. The paramaikāntin knows, feels and acts with the s'āstraic conviction that Bhagavān is both the means and the end, the prāpaka and the brābva. As the ādheva, the bhakta realises his inseparability from Paramatman like the radiance of the sun (the prabha of Bhāskara) and lives only in the love of God. He feels that Brahman is absolute bliss and renounces the pleasures of aisvarya or wealth and the happiness of kaivalya and other egoistic satisfaction, and realises that he exists for the satisfaction of the sess. Bhakti increases pari passu with the intensity of self-renouncement or vairagya. As sesa he recognises the supreme truth, namely, 'I am not He, but am eternally His dāsa,' not sōham but dāsōham, and effaces himself in the service of the seṣī. Every karma by thought, word and deed is transfigured into kainkarya or worship of Bhagavān, as He is Himself the ultimate doer and the deed. Service to the sess is entirely different from dasya in the ordinary sense. To attribute it to the slave mentality of the creature awe-struck by the dictatorial flat of the capricious Lord is the result of deep-rooted prejudice and misunderstanding of the function of the will. The will of Bhagavān as nivantā is

the will to love and be ruled by love and the will of the sesa consists in its response to the divine call and attunement with the redeeming purpose by developing the attitude of service to God as the only motive of conduct and as its sole end. The rewards and rebuffs of life arise from self-alienation from the sesi, and the paramaikantin or absolute and perfect devotee knows that the real evil is not suffering but the sin of self-estrangement from the s'arīrin. Thus the philosophic knowledge of Brahman as ādhāra and the jīva as ādheya has its fruition in the religious relation of sess and sesa or svāmin and dāsa. Such dāsyatva or service is not a task implying a must or an ought but is a spiritual experience which is sui generis, and it connotes pāratantrya or dependence on the Lord and pārārthya or existence for the Lord. It is not even induced by the goodness of God but is the true relation of the self to God who is necessarily good, not gunairdasya but svarūba dāsya. The self enters the service of the Lord not owing to the attraction of His qualities but owing to its own real nature. The bhakta recognises Bhagavān as his only Lord and serves His will, as such service is the only goal of religious experience and constitutes the highest joy of life or rasa. It is the self that primarily experiences ananda or bliss, and not its body or sarīra, and all the delights of life belong not to the jīva but to the jīva-sarīrin or the Supreme Self who lives within the self. While the mood of pāratantrya is aroused by our unworthiness, that of pārārthya is unconditioned self-surrender to the will of God, the only seṣī. The paramaikāntin thus lives and has his being in bhakti, and not only has aisvarya or kaivalya no charms for him, but even mukti has no value, if it were emptied of bhakti. Samsāra with uninterrupted bhakti has itself the value of apavarga or moksa and Vedanta Desika's

preference of Varada-bhakti here and now to the bliss of Vai-kuṇṭha that is beyond is a typical Vaiṣṇavite experience, which has practically more value than jīvanmukti. Another feature of pāramaikāntya is the intense love of Bhagavān to the bhakta whom He regards as His prakārin or sarīrin. He is extolled as the mahātma who intuits Him everywhere as Vāsudeva and is sustained by Him as his ādhāra and seṣī. Bhakti as service to God is completed or consummated only in the ideal of service to godly persons and to all jīvas and is the supreme end of pāramaikāntya.

The jñānī meditates on Brahman as his self and cultivates exclusive devotion to Him or ekabhakti and is the true bhakta, as his devotion is controlled by the single idea of attaining mukti. When Bhakti Yoga thus becomes a means to moksa, it is called parabhakti. This bhakti is awakened only by s'āstraic knowledge purified by karma and sanctified by iñāna, and when it develops into a thirst for the direct intuition of Bhagavān it is called parajñāna. Then the view of God becomes a vision of God, but it is still not perfect; love leads to a continuous and deep longing for God and unquenchable spiritual thirst; and then parabhakti becomes parama bhakti.3 The bhakta at this stage is not satisfied by mere visions, voices and auditions which are only intimations of immortality, but eagerly and restlessly seeks the stability of eternal bliss. The bhakta longs to see the beauteous form of Bhagavān with the eye of the soul and hear the music of love with the spiritual ear. While the philosopher in him cogitates on Brahman as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Vedānta Des'ika; Varadarāja Pañcās'at, 49.

 <sup>2.....</sup> jñānavān mām prapadyate |
 Vasudevas sarvamiti sa mahātmā sudurlabhah || B. G., VII. 19.
 jñānītvātmaiva me matam |.—B. G., VII. 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Vedānta Des'ika: Rahasyatraya Sāra, Ch. IX.

the ultimate unity of all existing things, the bhakta hungers for union and communion with the Self who has established His home in the interior of his heart. He does not desire the gifts of God like aisvarya and kaivalya, but seeks the Giver Himself. By renouncing his egoism, he seeks to attain Brahman, who is all in all. When the bhakta seeks God, God also seeks him and the lover and the beloved are finally united in the realm of mukti.

In his well-known work, the "Paramapada Sopana," Vedanta Desika indicates the nine stages in the path to perfection, of which the first five, viz., viveka, nirveda, virakti, bhītībhāva and upāya, constitute the means. While the jīva continuously suffers from the sorrows of samsāra arising from the cycle of karma, avidyā, vāsanā, ruci and prakṛtisambandha and is bewildered by the confusion of ajñāna or ignorance, sams'aya or doubt, and viparyaya or wrong notion, the Lord of Love, ever on the watch for an occasion to turn the jīva from his career of sin and redeem him from the error of his ways, finds a suitable opportunity and comes to him as the Brahma guru. The mumuksu is blessed with viveka and acquires a clear and distinct knowledge of the difference between cit, acit and Isvara in terms of s'eṣī and s'eṣa and of His attributes of jñātrtva, kartrtva and bhöktrtva as depending on and derived from the Supreme Self as parama sess. Reflecting on the wickedness and vanity of earthly life, the mumuksu becomes sick-minded and is seized with remorse. Instead of serving the s'esī as Bhagavat kinkara he has become the slave of sensibility and sin as indriya kinkara, and this knowledge brings on the mood of repentance. Viveka and nirveda lead to virakti. The mumuksu realises his nature as an atman different from the

deha and feels the hazards and hardships of samsāra, to which he is exposed by his raga and dveṣa, and renounces the pleasures of sense and sensibility and even the happiness of Svarga. If pāpa is an iron chain of karma binding the jīva to samsāra. punya is but a golden chain leading to Svarga where the iīva serves the devas for a time like a beast of burden and is finally hurled again into the world of adventure. The mumuksu, therefore, rejects and renounces the values of earthly and heavenly life, and discrimination is thus followed by remorse and dissociation from bodily feelings. In the fourth stage, the dread of the infinite chain of karma and of the sinfulness of ancient sin becomes a marked feature of the spiritual struggle. While viveka arrests ātmāpahāra or the stealing of the ātman by the senses and the loss of the self, nirveda is the moral feeling that sin should be avoided owing to its fatal effect (nisiddha nivrtti) and virakti destroys sensuality. In the bhīti parva, the author traces the ultimate cause of ignorance and sin and their self-multiplying power which cannot be destroyed by expiation or retribution, and brings home to the mind of the mumuksu the hideousness and horrors of sin and the miseries of metempsychosis and samsāra familiarly known as the tābatraya or threefold torment. The classic portrayal by Tirumangai Alvar of the tyranny of karma and the tragedy of human sorrows by the analogies of the storm-tossed ship, the dilemma of the ant caught between the two burning ends of a faggot, the pack of animals on an island enveloped by rising floods and the man dwelling with cobras in the house is unsurpassed in religious literature. This mood of sick-mindedness is only a spur to spiritual effort and therefore a passing phase in religious evolution, and the mumuksu not only seeks freedom from avidyā-karma, but, as a bhakta, seeks reunion with the Lord. The next stage of Bhakti

Yoga explains the rationale of bhakti and defines it as the continuous and loving meditation on Bhagavān with the vividness of a direct intuition. Bhakti is not merely the act of pleasing God by external worship but is also an inner spiritual attitude enriched by the eight virtues or ātma gunas. They consist of s'auca or purity, kṣānti or patience, anasūyā or absence of jealousy, anāyāsa or absence of depression, asprhā or absence of covetousness, akārpaņya or strength of mind, mangala or good deeds, kind words and noble thoughts and sarva bhūtesu dayā or love to all beings. When bhakti deepens into prema bhakti or ananya bhakti or absolute devotion, it ceases to be an injunction and becomes a deep yearning for God. God is also seized: with soul-hunger and yearns for communion with the jīva. When scriptural faith in God ceases to be of the bargaining type and is marked by fidelity and fervour, the soul-hunger for God becomes irrepressible and the two are united together for ever in love.

## CHAPTER XVI

## PRAPATTI

THE building up of bhakti is an elaborate process of synthesis, which unites the different mental elements of conation or karma, cognition or jñāna, and feeling or bhōga and brings them into a higher synthesis of religious aspiration, bhaktirūpāpanna jñāna or the knowledge which has become bhakti. The devotional process pulsates with the triple rhythm of Karma Yoga, Iñana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga; and the symmetry of the triadic process set forth in Visistadvaita, by which the atman ascends to the absolute, remains unsurpassed in the philosophy of religion. It portrays the return of the jīva to its home in Brahman, by which the sense of self-alienation is overcome. Karma Yōga presupposes the sastraic knowledge of the distinction between the atman and Paramatman, and it consists in the performance of duty as a divine command without caring for the fruits of karma and in acquiring moral autonomy. Iñāna Yōga helps in the process of self-realisation or ātmāvalōkana through self-renunciation. The ātman is experienced as a spiritual entity different from the natural self arising from the mistaken identity of the jīva with the deha or body, and the true aham 'I' lives by the death of the false ahankāra or egoism. The knowledge of the ātman leads to God-consciousness or bhakti. In Bhakti Yōga the theoretical

knowledge of Bhagavān develops into upāsana or meditation on the Lord including His svarūpa, rūpa and guṇa. Upāsana is dhruvāsmṛti or steady thought of God, which gains in intensity by āvṛtti or ceaseless practice till the end is attained. Smṛti or thought thereby acquires the glow and vividness of darsana or vision. Then karma becomes kainkarya or service and worship of God. Jñāna, which, in its early stages, is buddhi or viveka (discrimination), develops into ātmajñāna or knowledge of the self and Brahmajñāna or knowledge of God; and bhakti ends in kainkarya; intellectual love and remembrance of God are changed into the realisation of God. When bhakti is no longer a prayer to, and praise of, Bhagavān for the gain of aisvarya or for the goal of kaivalya, but is love for love's sake, the bhakta becomes a paramaikāntin.

The love of God becomes, in course of time, a thirst for communion and parabhakti deepens into parajñāna; and parajñāna results in paramabhakti or supreme devotion and becomes irresistible. The progression in bhakti corresponds to the awakening of divine grace. Brahman as Isvara becomes a redeemer and finally the Lord of Love. Bhakti has its consummation in mukti and the attainment of the eternal bliss of Brahman. The philosophy of bhakti is thus a ladder of love from earth to heaven and the philosophy of divine grace, one from heaven to earth; and the sublimity of the whole design is only matched by its symmetry. It is however too sublime for the ordinary man to follow. The four main requirements or adhikāra for Bhakti Yōga are a clear philosophic knowledge of the realms of karma, jñāna and bhakti, the will rigorously to undergo the discipline in due order, the sāstraic qualification of birth as an essential aid to bhakti and the satvic patience to endure the ills of prārabdha karma till it is exhausted or expiated. The whole design collapses even if a single condition in the long vista of its evolution is not fulfilled or a false step is taken. The path of bhakti finally leads to the world of Bhagavān, but is strewn with infinite pitfalls and setbacks. It is likened to a bridge of hair over a river of fire, and the jīva, with its load of avidyā and proneness to evil, has, in this Kali age of confusion, very little chance of reaching the goal of liberation. But sāstra, in its infinite tenderness for erring and weak-kneed humanity, guarantees God to all jīvas irrespective of their status and station in life. As demonstrated by Vedānta Desika, the chief apostle of Visiṣṭādvaita, after Rāmānuja, it has provided for the weak and infirm an alternative path to mukti known as prapatti.

The misconception that Prapatti Yoga is an alien graft on Vedānta and not an inner growth is removed by an appeal to sastra and sastraic experience. The Upanisad prescribes for the mumuksu, prapatti and bhakti which lead to Brahma brasāda or the grace of God, the pre-requisite for mukti. The Gītā, as the essence of Upanisadic wisdom, summons the whole world of jīvas that are heavily laden with sin to renounce their duties and take refuge at the feet of the universal saviour and offers mukti to all of them. In the systematic exposition of the Vidyās, the Vedānta Sūtras, according to the S'rutaprakās'ika, the classic gloss on the S'rī Bhāsya, insist on the unity of all Brahma Vidyās, and it is the intention of the Sūtrakāra to include the Nyāsa Vidyā or Prapatti Yōga among the important means to mōksa. The spiritual experience of the Tamil seers or Alvārs is epitomised [Tiruvāimoļi, VI. x. 10] in the nyāsa of Nammāļvār who is extolled as the super-prapanna of S'rī Vaisnavism. Bhakti Yōga is a steep path to mukti hedged in by the exacting

conditions of Karma Yoga and Jñāna Yoga, and it includes the wearisome disciplines of astānga yōga, and is a gradual progression in religious consciousness. Although bhakti is a desirable means to mukti, it is not easily practised in this Kali Yuga owing to its arduousness. But prapatti preserves the essentials of bhakti, dispenses with its predisposing causes or conditions, which are only contingent, and omits the nonessentials like the need for ceaseless practice. It is thus a direct and independent (advāraka) means to mōkṣa. The only requisite for *prapatti* is the change of heart or contrition on the part of the mumuksu and his absolute confidence in the saving grace of the raksaka. It is not the possession of merit that is the operative cause of grace or dayā, but the sense of one's unworthiness and the sinfulness of sin. The Lord is the only way and goal to the mumuksu and prapatti is the act of selfsurrender to His grace. It is not a juristic conception of debit and credit account between the  $j\bar{v}a$  as the doer of karma and Isvara as the giver of boons, nor is it an undeserved favour of the Lord. It implies an intimate relation between the self-gift of the mumuksu and the flow of divine mercy or dayā. Redemption is a justification by faith or mahāvisvāsa and not by works, and it is not won by merit as the result of a continuous process. It is the essence of the religion of brabatti that the Lord of grace seeks the prapanna and draws him to Himself. The act has a summary effect, as it destroys even prārabdha karma or karma that has begun to operate. The supreme merit of prapatti lies in the universality of its appeal to all castes and classes, the guarantee of salvation to all jīvas who cannot follow the precipitous and arduous path of bhakti. its intrinsic and independent value as means or upāya and the naturalness and ease in securing immediate effect (sarvādhikāratva, sukaratā, sakrtkartavyatā and avilamba bhalatva).

The inner meaning and value of brabatti is revealed by Pillai Lökācārya and Vedānta Desika in their exposition of the three sacred truths or rahasya traya which contain the essentials of Vedānta in terms of tatva, hita, and burusārtha. They are known as mūla mantra, dvaya and carama sloka: the first states them in a nutshell, the second makes the meaning more explicit and the third elaborates it still further. The pranava in the mula mantra sums up wisdom in the sacred sound and is the supreme mantra of the Nyāsa Vidyā.1 The letter अ or akāra connotes Paramātman as the source of all things, ideas and words, the twenty-sixth tatva which is the truth of all things and also the alpha and omega of language; ukāra or the letter 3 denotes S'rī in the dual sense of S'rivahbati; makāra or the letter H refers to the jīva who is thus declared to be the ādheya or supported and the sesa or dependent of S'riyahpati. The Nyāsa Vidyā condemns selfconceit and self-love and affirms the truth of pāratantrvam or the soul's utter dependence on God, and it signifies the self-oblation of the jīva to Paramātman who is its self. The mūla mantra is an expansion of the pranava, and it makes the meaning more clear by equating Brahman with Nārāyana and explaining the means to moksa as atmanivedana or selfgift to the sesī. The term Nārāyana in the mantra is vogarūdha, i.e., significant and singular. He is the one without a second, not in the mathematical but in the metaphysical sense. As akāra and Nārāyaņa, Paramātman is immanent in all beings as their life without losing His transcendental eminence and is the sarva rakṣaka that redeems all jīvas from their evil career. He is the ground of all existence and the giver of all

¹ praṇavō dhanus'sarōhyātmā brahmatallakṣyam ucyate l apramattena vēddhavyam s'aravat tanmayō bhavet ll.—Muṇḍ. Up. II. ii. 4. Om ityātmānam yuñjīta l—Taitt. Up., Narayan, 79.

good. Nara is the makāra of praṇava and it refers to the universe of cit and acit of which Nārāyaṇa is the pervading Self. Nārāyaṇa is immanent in the nara and is also the goal or ayana of the nara. The middle word namaḥ of the mantra prescribes the abandonment of all egoism (ahānkāra) or selfnaughting and saraṇāgati as the chief hita or upāya, and it also connotes the truth that God is the only goal of life. Thus the mūla mantra as a whole and in each of its parts proclaims that Nārāyaṇa alone is the source of all existence, the goal of all experience and the means of realising that goal. He is the saviour of all jīvas and all actions should be dedicated to the seṣī who is the real Actor, and the highest offering is self-gift to the seṣī to whom the self belongs by divine right.

The mumukṣu as a philosopher-devotee trains his intellect in all its eight aspects and offers the eight flowers of bhakti to Bhagavān. Buddhi is disciplined in eight ways which are grahaṇa or quick grasp of Vedāntic truth, dhāraṇa or retention in the mind, smaraṇa or reproduction, pratipādaṇa or lucid exposition to others, ūha or inferring the unknown from the known, apōha or apperception and application in new contexts, vijñāṇa or discrimination and tatvajñāṇa or the knowledge of first principles. The eight flowers of devotion to be offered at the feet of the Lord are the avoidance of harm to others or ahimsā, sovereignty over the senses or indriya nigraha, benevolence to all beings or sarvabhūta dayā, forgiveness or kṣamā, knowledge or jñāṇa, austerity or tapas, meditation or dhyāna and truthfulness or satya.

¹ svaprāptes svayameva sādhanatayā jōghuṣyamānaḥ.—Vedānta Des'ika, Rahasyatraya Sāra, Ch. XXIII.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S'rī Vātsya Varadācārya's Prapanna Pārijāta, V. 28-29.

Dvaya has kingly pre-eminence over other mantras, as it brings out the full implications of the supreme tatva or truth, as S'rīman Nārāyana or Nārāyana and S'rī. The first half initiates the seeker after God into the rahasya that Nārāyana is not only the source and centre of the universe (Jagathati), but is also the Lord of Love or S'riyahpati and that S'rī resides in the heart of Nārāyaṇa to redeem the sinning sundered self from its sinfulness. The dual form of the Godhead typifies the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God designed to inspire the hope of universal salvation. The jīva, realising his utter unworthiness, casts himself on the mercy of the Lord which is spontaneously showered on him. Prapatti as an act or attitude of self-surrender presupposes the shedding of egoism and the sense of responsibility and also implies responsiveness to the operation of grace. The second part deals with prapti and the *brabanna* realises that his self-feeling is swept away by the downpour of mercy and he leads a dedicated life, and eats, drinks and lives by religion. What is implicit in the Svetāsvatara Upanisad ' and Katha S'ruti is elaborated in the Gadya of Rāmānuja and the Rahasyatraya Sāra of Vedānta Desika and is exemplified in the saranagati of Nammalvar, the superprapanna of S'rī Vaisnavism and of Yāmunācārya3. The Vedāntic truth that Brahman exists to Brahmanise the jīva is illumined by the Pāñcarātra idea of Vāsudeva and Nārāyaņa as ruler and raksaka and is further confirmed by the assurance contained in the dvaya mantra and the Tamil Prabandha that -divine justice is not only tempered by dayā or compassion but is dominated by it. The word S'rī has six meanings in the

<sup>1</sup> mumukşur vai s'aranam aham prapadye.—Sv. Up., VI, 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Tiruvoimozhi, VI. x. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> na dharma nisthösmi na cătmavedi na bhaktimān tvaccaraņāravinde l akiñcanönanyagati's' s'aranya tvatpādamūlam s'aranam prapadye || Stötraratnam, 21.

religion of redemption, of which the most relevant is the idea of her converting Isvara as ruler into saranya or saviour by her timely intercession and mediation on behalf of the repentant sinner. In the epic conflict between the ideas of retribution and forgiveness, law rules over love in the moral realm, and the two are balanced in ethical religion; but in the sphere of the religion of redemption, dayā or mercy dominates over dandadharatva or retributive justice and transforms the love of law into the law of love. S'rī is svāminī to the jīva and as burusakāra or mediator, she mediates on behalf of the sinner and is the eternal link of love between the Ruler and the transgressor, transforming the former into the Saviour and the latter into the penitent seeker after pardon. The words prapadye and namah in the dvaya mantra insist on the need for renouncing egoism (svarūþa samarþana) and the sense of self-responsibility (bhara samarpana) on the ground that the Lord and S'rī are upāya and upeya or the endeavour and the end and for performing kainkarya for the satisfaction of the s'eṣī. The s'araṇāgati of Nammāļvār in the Tiruvāimozhi (VI. x. 10) is the pattern of prapatti set by a super-prapanna, as it eminently satisfies the requirements of the Upanisad and the Gītā. It reveals the organic relation between the saranya or Saviour and the saranagata or soul that seeks refuge in Him in terms of s'araṇāgati. Laksmī resides for ever as and in the heart of Isvara as anapāyinī or inseparably united and is indistinguishable from Him like the fragrance from the flower. The two, Isvara and S'rī, are one ontologically, but different functionally owing to the redemptive needs of the jīva. In the interests of redemption, Laksmī becomes the Isvarī of Isvara and changes His law of karma into the rule of krpā. Īsvara overpowered by dayā or compassion and vātsalya or

affection renounces His paratva or supreme greatness and incarnates as S'rinivāsa of unsurpassable beauty and love. He is the only saranya or refuge and strength of the jīva; Aļvār as saranāgata seeks refuge at His feet with the intercession of Lakṣmī as puruṣakāra or mediator, and saranāgati or prapatti is self-surrender at the feet of S'rīnivāsa with the conviction that He is the only upāya and upeya.

The religion of saranagati is enshrined in the Carama S'loka or final teaching of the Lord in the Gītōbanisad and the knowledge of this supreme secret or rahasyatama is intended to remove the sorrows of life and afford the stability of salvation. In the philosophy of religion, Brahman is the infinite beyond the world, the Holy that exacts reverence and the Immanent that brings out mystic intimacy. The conception of the same Brahman as the Redeemer brings to light the qualities of saulabhya, vātsalya and kārunya which are indispensable in a redeemer. S'rī Krsna, the Lord of davā, as the sārathi or charioteer of Arjuna, the rathī, the typical son of man or Nara, with all the frailties of humanity, drives home the gospel of mukti as a song of love to all who suffer from the burden of sin and are unable to overcome it by their own effort. "Renounce all dharmas and take refuge in me; I shall release you from all sins. Grieve not." Every karma presupposes five factors of which the real operative cause is the redemptive will of God working through the freedom of the itva. It is this truth that furnishes the motive and meaning to the imperative of niṣkāma karma: 'Do your karma'; of wbāsana, 'Meditate on Brahman' and of the Prapatti Yoga Renounce all dharmas and take refuge in me.' The moral law, the Upanisadic injunction and the command of the raksaka derive their authority from the supreme truth that the

kartā is an instrument of Isvara. The divine imperative 'Renounce dharma and take refuge in me' (parityajya and vraja) implies the freedom of the jīva to follow it. The freedom of the self is Isvarādhīna or dependent on Isvara and it is fulfilled only when it is attuned to the will of the raksaka. Even the will to serve the Lord by self-effacement is only the gift of His grace. Tyaga or renunciation connotes the abandonment not of karma and spiritual endeavour but only of the sense of egoism. Karma sannyāsa as the literal giving up of all one's duties would destroy the moral foundations of service and upāya nirāsā might result in moral and social irresponsibility. The essential condition of nyāsa is not the abandonment of duty but the renunciation of the egoistic motive. The consummation of karma is kainkarya or service consecrated to the saranya. The Lord is ultimately both the endeavour and the end, the prāpya and the prāpaka, the upāya and the upeya. The sadhyōpāya is the act of selfsurrender (saranam vraja) to the will of the raksaka who is the inner ruler and the siddhopāya is the Lord Himself (mām ekam). Such s'arānagati is the most efficacious means to moksa and the removal of suffering. The Lord reveals Himself to the prapanna, who seeks Him as his absolute refuge.

If the Mūlamantra explains the theory of saraṇāgati and the Dvayamantra elaborates it, and shows also how it is to be practised, the Carama S'lōka explicitly prescribes saraṇāgati as the means to be adopted by the mumukṣu incapable of Bhakti Yōga or as the response to divine grace and expressly promises him release from all the accumulated load of sins that prevent his enjoyment of the birthright of absolute service to the Lord in Paramapada. The first quarter refers to the mumukṣu who is anxious to be released from the burden of samsāra but is

unable to undergo the arduous discipline of Bhahti Yōga and the second prescribes the taking of refuge in the Lord as the sole Saviour. The second half promises the fullest release from sin to those who practise self-surrender with supreme faith in the Saviour and bids them be of good cheer. It is the call of the Redeemer to the whole of humanity: "Come unto me, all ye who are heavily laden, abandoning your egoism, and I shall give you eternal life and myself." The sinner seeks God and is saved, and God seeks the sinner and is satisfied. The unique value of the Carama S'lōka lies in its universal appeal to all sinners to seek refuge in Him and be saved.

The scheme of *brabatti* is elaborated in its six angas or parts known as ānukūlya sankalpa, prātikūlya varjana. mahavisvāsa, kārbanya, gobtrtvavarana and ātma nikseba.1 The first furnishes the satvic motive to follow the will of the sesi. When the human will is emptied of egoism or ahankara, it is divinely enriched and attuned to the redemptive purpose of the raksaka. It also connotes the will of the mumuksu to serve all jīvas (sarvabhūtānukūlva). Prātikūlya varjana is the negative way of stating the same truth, and consists in the renunciation of what is repugnant to the Lord. Mahāvisvāsa is absolute and firm faith in the saving grace of God as the universal raksaka. It is unshakable confidence in prapatti as guaranteeing God. The fourth anga known as karpanya expresses the feeling of incapacity to follow the prescribed path of karma, jñāna and bhakti. The sense of utter unworthiness and helplessness creates this feeling of humility. The fifth is goptrtvavarana and is the act of seeking the dayā of the Lord as the only

¹ Ahirbudhnya Samhita, XXXVII. ii. 27 and 28 as quoted in Vedanta Des'ika's Rahastraya Sara, Chap. XI. The last, atma nikşepa, is sometimes called the angin of which the other five are angas or parts.

hope for moksa. The last factor is atma niksepa which consists in self-oblation to the sesī with the conviction that such self-donation is itself a gift of God's grace. The brahanna is tormented by the thought that the transgression of the divine commands entails the wrath of the moral ruler and that the wages of sin is moral and spiritual death. The sinfulness of sin is too deep for expiation or recompense. But the religion of saranagati dispels the scepticism of the moral consciousness and the fears of spiritual fall are dispelled by the assurance that krbā reigns in the realm of religion and ousts the evils of avidyā-karma and that no sin is so sinful as to exhaust the redemptive grace of God. Mahāvisvāsa is the absolutely clear and distinct knowledge of the omnipotence of dayā and is therefore the central and ruling motive of Prapatti Yoga. The other conditions follow from this spiritual conviction and exalt the levels of conation, feeling and cognition. While Bhakti Yoga is the arduous building up of devotion from below a posteriori, prapatti is the a priori way of divine dayā and is the descent of krpā into the realm of karma; but whether it is from earth to heaven or from heaven to earth, the essentials of bhakti and prapatti are the same, namely, the illumined faith in the saving grace of God as both the upāya and the upeya. The motive also determines the nature of the end; and he who seeks kaivalya or aisvarya attains it, and he who seeks Bhagavān attains Bhagavān. On realising other ends, Bhagavān may or may not be attained but, by realising God, all other ends are also realised. "Whom He chooses. unto him He reveals Himself." The jnani seeks God as his sarīrin and offers himself to Him. God in turn seeks the jñanī as His sarīrin and guarantees mukti to him.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kath. Up., I. ii. 22.

Prapatti as the religion of ātmanikṣepa is also considered under the three aspects of phala samarbana. bhara samarbana and svarūba samarbana or the renouncement of the hedonistic, the moralistic and the egoistic views of life. Of these, phala samarpana or phalatyaga is the abandonment of the hedonistic motive that self-satisfaction or happiness is the supreme end of prapatti. While the seekers after aisvarya and kaivalya pursue the happiness of Svarga and the inner joy of ātmāvalōkana, the true follower of prapatti knows that as an ananyārha s'eşa or absolute dependent he subsists in the sess and exists for His satisfaction and so gives up every form of egoistic or selfish satisfaction. True s'esatva is realised when the s'esa knows that he is nothing, has nothing and does nothing and thus renounces the selfish feelings of 'I,' 'my' and 'mine' or kartrtva, mamatā and svārtha. The verbs 'to be' and 'to have' agree with the subject ahankāra and have thus no place in the grammar of prapatti. Even the consciousness of religious individualism that arises from the joy of freedom or ātmaraksā sayours of selfism and has therefore to be abandoned and overcome. Secondly, bharasamarpana is the renunciation of the sense of responsibility involved in the saving act. Redemption or ātmarakṣā comes from the rakṣaka who is Himself the sādhya and the sādhana or the end and the means and not from the will of the prapanna, owing to his impotence to follow the ordained path. Prapatti removes the heaviness of heart due to the sense of duty and effort and to the burden of sin. While Bhakti Yōga demands ceaseless moral effort and spiritual arduousness and vigil, prapatti is not such a toilsome task and requires only a change of heart and a living faith in the saving power of dayā. By casting oneself on  $day\bar{a}$ , the weight of world-weariness

is lifted off and the brabanna becomes fearless (nirbhaya). Thirdly, svarūbatyāga is not only the elimination of ahankāra but is also the gift of the self or ātman to God who is its real owner or Self. The jīva lives but is not the jīva as such but the sarīrin or sesī that lives in it. The term 'aham' is the self that has its being and worth only in the sarīrin and therefore svarūbatyāga consists in giving back the self to its Owner. All these forms of sātvika sacrifice or service are deduced from the first principles of religious experience consisting in the life of God in the love of man; it marks a radical or revolutionary change from the egocentric view or svasvāmitva to the theocentric or Krsnacentric view of pāratantrya which is summed up in the truth "sarvam Krsnārpaņamastu." Everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa and is offered to Kṛṣṇa. The Visiṣṭādvaitic meaning of brabatti is summarised in a kārika of Vedānta Desika as follows:

Svāmin svaseṣam svavasam svabharatvena nirbharam l svadatta svadhiyā svārtham svasmin nyasyasi mām svayam ||

The word svārtha denotes phalasamarpana signifying that the seṣa exists for the satisfaction of the seṣā and that the only end of ātma samarpana is the realisation of His will as the only will. The words svabharatvena nirbharam signify bhara samarpana or the idea that ātmarakṣā is the concern of the saranya and not of the saranāgata. The word svaseṣa connotes the fact of self-oblation as the main motive for prapatti. The couplet thus expounds the Visiṣṭādvaitic idea that the ātman has jñātrtva or self-consciousness, kartrtva or freedom and bhōktrtva or feeling tone but the jīva as the sarīra of Paramātman has its triple

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Vedānta Des'ika's Nyāsa Das'aka, verse 2.

function of knowing, willing and feeling fulfilled organically in the life of the s'arīrin. Prabatti is the religious conclusion of the philosophy of the s'arīra-s'arīrī relation and it affirms that the sarīrin is Himself the upāya and the upeya. The terms svārtha, svadatta and svayam nyasyasi proclaim the truth that atmasamarbana is self-donation to the bara s'esī who is the giver and the gift, the end and the endeavour. The theory of vvāja or justification by faith as developed by Vedānta Desika further illuminates the meaning of Prapatti Yoga and its ultimate relation to the saving grace of the saranya. The seeker after prapatti has spiritual freedom to serve the Lord and become an instrument in the divine scheme. His will is divinely determined (barādhīna) and not self-determined (svādhīna). Prapatti Yōga is a free act of absolute self-surrender to the rakṣaka without any hedonistic or utilitarian considerations. It is not a way of recompense or a legalistic view of karma resting on antecedent merit but is justification by faith. Merit has ethical meaning, but dayā is a divine quality and is therefore amoral. Forgiveness transcends the moralistic view of karma; but if it is free without even the desire to deserve it, the doctrine might encourage favouritism, laxity and license. Davā as the amoral is the fulfilment of the moral, and is not hostile to it. The self seeks God's grace and strives to deserve it and the grace of God lifts him up.

The Sūtrakāra affirms the truth that if kṛpā or grace is not considered to be rooted in righteousness, arbitrariness and cruelty would have to be attributed to the divine nature. The forgiveness of the rakṣaka presupposes the quality of forgiveableness in the jīva and a change of heart. The gift of dayā

¹ na vaişamya nairghrņye sāpekṣatvāt, V. S., II. i. 34.

may be unreserved, but should not be undeserved. The theory of waja reconciles the claims of human endeavour and divine davā on the principle that a trivial cause may occasion a mighty effect, e.g., the turning of a switch may result in the illumination of a whole city. Similarly, a spark, nay, even a show, of contrition may result in a conflagration and consume the effect of age-long karma. A little leaven of sincerity may leaven the whole life of the jīva. An infinitesimal effort may lead to infinite mercy. Vvāja results from the feeling of ākiñcanya or one's moral and spiritual littleness. This, however, should be genuine and not a mere show of penitence to serve as an excuse for divine intervention. The act of forgiveness presupposes a change of heart and this is a qualitative and not a quantitative change; contrition alone opens the flood gates of  $krp\bar{a}$  and it is more in the spirit than in the letter. The words s'aranam vraja in the Carama S'lōka of the Gītā, though they presuppose and posit the fact of redemption as the expression of causeless grace (nirhetuka  $krp\bar{a}$ ), at the same time emphasise the fact that grace needs a vyāja or occasion to reveal itself. The seed can sprout only in a suitable soil, and  $krp\bar{a}$  can never take root in the soil of hard-heartedness, dissimulation, hostility or atheistic scepticism.

S'rī Vaiṣṇavism extols the Rāmāyaṇa as a text-book of practical religion par excellence and regards it as a saraṇāgati veda, of which the topic known as abhaya pradāna relating to the acceptance by Rāma of Vibhīṣana's surrender to Him is the Upaniṣad. By the application of the six Mimāmsā rules of interpretation known as upakrama, upasamhāra, abhyāsa, apūrvatva, arthavāda and upapatti, it is proved that the epic as a unity with continuity of

meaning and value has as its central theme the redemption of the jīvas by self-surrender to the Lord. It is the epic exposition of the metaphysical, moral and religious aspects of Vedānta, i.e., tatva, hita and puruṣārtha in the light of the s'aranāgati s'āstra. Paratatva or the supreme truth is the transcendental Brahman of the Upanisads, that incarnated into humanity as the sarva s'aranya or saviour of all beings; saranāgati is the universal means of salvation and is therefore the parama hita or greatest good. The supreme end or purusartha is kainkarya or service to Him and to all jivas. The main theme of all the six Kāndas is the divine assurance of forgiveness to all that seek refuge at the feet of God whether they are human, sub-human, or celestial jīvas, including even Rākṣasas who are ever hostile to the cosmic redemptive purpose of Isvara. The Hindu view of animal and other subhuman species seeking the rakṣaka has got a spiritual as opposed to the naturalistic foundation, owing to the kinship of all jivās and their common divine heritage. It is based on the idea of harma and rebirth and the spiritual development of the jīva, which, though eternal, self-conscious and free by nature, falls from its high state and enters into various bodies owing to its karma. The highly evolved, who abuse their freedom, lapse into vice and are born as birds and other animals, may get glimpses of their divine origin and seek pardon through penitence. The classic examples of the materialised Ahalyā touched by the lotus feet of the Lord leaping into life -once again, the afflicted Kākāsura flying to the Lord for mercy after his vain and weary flight through all the worlds in fear of life, Gajendra, crying out to the creator for protection in its distress and Sugrīva, seeking refuge at the feet of Rāma, are freely quoted by the devout Hindu, as inspiring types of the redemptive acts of the raksaka.

The fullest exposition of the divine assurance of salvation or abhaya pradana is given in the section dealing with Vibhīsana saranāgati. Vibhīsana, the virtuous, denounces Rāvana's wickedness, renounces all his relations and possessions and flies from Lanka and falls at the feet of Rāma invoking his mercy. He typifies the jīva that dreads the follies and allurements of the sensuous life surrounding it owing to its isolation from the Lord and insular life and, equipped with the five angas of prapatti, soars homeward and Godward and yearns for the security and stability of abhaya pradana or God's assurance of salvation. The Lord is sarvaloka saranya, the saviour and refuge of the whole universe; Vibhīṣaṇa, though a Rākṣasa by birth, seeks refuge at the feet of the s'āranya as the only hope of life, and the Lord accepts him by proclaiming His redemptive purpose to all the three worlds and summoning them to share Hisdivine love. "Come unto me, all ye who are heavily laden, saints and sinners, devas and Raksasas, all the jīvas of the world; even a show of friendship melts me and moves me to give you succour and safety. Even the dove in the tree gave up its life to serve as food to the hungry hunter that sought its shade. None that seeks me as Saviour will ever be given up by me. Him shall I succour and save from all his enemies. I can never give up such a person. No one who seeks protection shall ever be forsaken. This is the law of love approved of by all good men." The universal Saviour or sarvalōkasaranya that is the inner self of all jīvas frees the jīva from the fears of samsāra and gives him eternal life and joy. The Rāmāyana is therefore extolled as the shrine of saranāgati or the scripture of self-surrender and it inspires every one with the hope of everlasting life and joy.

<sup>1</sup> Rāmāyaṇa, 'Yuddhakāṇḍa,' XVIII. 3 and 33.

The theory of Bhakti Yōga and Prapatti Yōga as sadhyōpāyas is not accepted by the school founded by Pillai Lokācārya (known as the Tenkalai school). According to it, Bhakti Yōga as a building up of devotion is, like Jacob's ladder, a vain and futile attempt besides being arduous and artificial, while Prapatti Yōga the alternative method, founded on the feeling of ākiñcanya, or the sense of unworthiness, is a confession of impotence. The Tenkalai school therefore interprets prapatti not as a yōga or human endeavour, but a mere faith in the grace of God or nirhetuka kaṭākṣa. The paradox of prapatti sastra arises from the Visistadvāitic truth that the sarva sesī is both the upāya and the prāpya, the means as well as the end of Vedāntic life, and it leads to the dualism between the spiritual effort of the  $j\bar{\imath}va$  and the spontaneity of divine grace. The Tenkalai denial of human initiative as a requisite condition of redemption leads to the predication of arbitrariness and favouritism in the divine will. The denial by the other school of Vaisnavism, the Vadakalai school, of the absoluteness of divine grace, or the free flow of divine dayā, without even a vyāja, affirms the primacy and priority of human freedom. This school upholds the upāya theory as the true position as it has sastraic support, and employs the analogy of the young monkey clinging to the mother for protection to illustrate the mumuksu seeking refuge at the feet of the saranya or saviour. The Tenkalai school maintains the opposite view, as it coheres with mystic experience and illustrates it by the analogy of the cat carrying the kitten in its mouth or the mārjāranyāya, as contrasted with the markața nyāya of the Vadakalais. The Vadakalai and Tenkalai views are sometimes compared to the volitional type and the self-surrender type mentioned by William James in his Varieties of Religious Experience, and the Christian

distinction between justification by works and justification by faith. But the comparison is superficial as the distinction between volition and self-surrender or that between works and faith is entirely different from the S'rī Vaiṣṇava views of sahetuka kaṭākṣa or grace arising from a cause and nirhetuka kaṭākṣa or grace not arising from any cause. Before examining these theories comparatively, it is essential to define the meaning of nirhetuka kaṭākṣa as explained by the Tenkalai school.

The Tenkalais insist on the operation of grace as unconditioned by human endeavour and as absolute, and they support this conclusion by appeal to revelation, reasoning and sense-perception. The well-known text, "Whom the Self chooses, by him is He attained" is confirmed by the Carama S'loka of the Gita and the mystic experience of Nammāļvār. The Gītā guarantees God to man and it is in the light of this operative dayā afforded by the Carama S'lōka that all the chapters should be read. Mōkṣa is not a goal to be won by yōgic discipline but is a gift of God to be received with gladness. If the Saviour is both the upāya and the upeya, the theory of seeking grace is self-contradictory. Forgiveness is justification by love and not by antecedent merit. Krpā is divinely bestowed and not won by moral effort. The moralistic view insists on a life of righteousness and piety and conformity to law, but such self-culture breeds a mood of self-righteousness and often sinks into the conceit of pietism. Forgiveness is a gift of the forgiver, and is spontaneous and free, and therefore is its own value. Godliness alone makes for goodness and not vice versa, as goodness cannot lead to godliness. Redemption justifies itself and is

¹ yamevaişa vrnute tena labhyah—Kath. Up., I. ii. 22.

not causally determined. It is not virtue that calls out davā. though dayā may call out virtue. Dayā comes as the leaves come to a tree. The pardoning Lord is the god of the sinner and He seeks the evil-doer more than He does the sātvika. He even relishes the physical evil or dosa in the prapanna like the mother who embraces with pleasure her dirt-stained child returning from play. The religion of nirhetuka-dayā should not be corrupted by economic and hedonistic considerations, as the calculating nature is fatal to its free flow. The difference between mulaibpal or mother's milk freely secreted for the baby and vilaippāl or milk sold in the market for money is the difference between the operative grace of the Lord or nirhetuka kaţākṣa and His consequent grace or sahetuka katāksa. The reign of dayā is absolute and dominates the ideas of moral and spiritual endeavour and ousts them from the realm of saranagati.

The Gītā is the unique expression of the gospel of nirhetuka kaṭākṣa in which the Lord is at once the teacher, mediator and saviour. The rahasyas or secret doctrines of the Mūlamantra, the Dvaya and the Carama S'lōka contain the quintessence of prapatti sāstra and drive home the truth that the rakṣaka is Himself the upāya and the prāpya and that His dayā is not conditioned by the causal law of karma or the moral needs of retribution. The rakṣaka is Himself the saviour as well as the salvation, the way as well as the goal, of the religious consciousness. The religion of nirhetuka kaṭākṣa is summarised in the Sūtra style in Tamil by Piḷḷai Lōkācārya in his work, "S'rī Vacana Bhūṣaṇa," which expounds the nature of puruṣakāra and prapatti. It denies the value of Bhakti Yōga disciplined by karma and jñāna, as the effort involved in the process is not commensurate with the spiritual

gain and even prapatti has no value if it is practised as a means to mukti. Bhakti and prapatti follow necessarily from the grace of the rakṣaka and are not essential antecedents of such grace. The endeavour of the jiva to attain the Lord is svagata svīkāra (or acceptance resulting from one's endeavour) and is utterly futile, but the idea of the raksaka seeking the jīva is paragata svīkāra or acceptance arising from the Lord's will and is natural and efficacious. The working of the redemptive will of the Lord is inconceivable in terms of the causal category as the law of dayā knows no higher law and is self-explanatory; grace ceases to be grace, if it is election by works. The only upaya to be followed by the mumuksu is to renounce the upāya mentality, receive the grace of God in a passive way and respond to the divine call of krba when it comes. The jīva, as a self-conscious and selfactive entity, should give up its ahankāra and become a thinking thing so that it may be the receptacle of krba. But the ātman in such an inert state is still the ātman and is incapable of the inert existence of matter; its spirituality is then consummated in service, ātma dāsya or kainkarya. Work is worship of God followed by service to all jīvas. The prapanna is a bhāgavata and his spiritual worth is not in any way influenced by his birth and social status. The idea of service extends to all castes and outcasts irrespective of the social distinction determined by the varnāgrama ideal. Service to the acarva is more important than service to the Lord as the ācārya is essentially interested in saving the disciple, whereas the Lord is both a severe Judge and a Saviour.

The difference between this school and the Vadakalai school is not about the exact relation between karma and

kṛpā, as both schools agree in the definition of mukti as the conquest of karma by kṛpā and its final cancellation. The main problem is the dualism between sahetuka kaṭākṣa and nirhetuka kaṭākṣa, and is more religious than ethical. Vedānta Desika's theory of vyāja is a reconciliation of the extremes, as it insists only on a gesture and change of heart on the part of the sinner and the difference between contrition and responsiveness to dayā is not radical. A spark of repentance destroys the whole load of avidyā-karma and thus the infinite series is annihilated by infinitesimal effort. distinction that Desika draws between the two standpoints of the sādhyōpāya and the siddhōpāya is intended to further narrow down the issue and bridge the gulf. Brahman is eternally self-realised and free and is the siddhopaya; but the mumukşu seeks the grace of God by bhakti and prapatti, as 'our will is somehow ours, only to make it His.' This distinction may be explained in terms of the noumenal aspect of grace which is free, and the phenomenal aspect where it is conditioned by effort. The siddhopaya is the transcendental standpoint of dayā as the free cause which is self-conditioned and spontaneous. The sādhyōpāya is the phenomenal or human aspect in which the self is relatively free and derives such freedom from the noumenal source. The phenomenal is rooted in the noumenal and the opposition between the two is apparent and not real. Human freedom is a problem from the phenomenal point of view and a possession from the noumenal. What is known as the free causality of dayā noumenally is known as yoga from the phenomenal standpoint. When the brapatti-seeker becomes a prapanna, the problem is not only solved but dissolved. The Teikalai school refuses to accept such distinctions and standpoints, as it stakes its faith in the absoluteness of dayā in which there is an identity of content

between the upaya and the upeya. The Vadakalais point to the moral and social dangers that might follow from the idea of absoluteness lapsing into the arbitrariness of election. dayā is free and unconditioned, vaisamya or arbitrariness and nairghrnya or cruelty would be attributable to the divine nature. If the human will is in any way free, it conflicts with divine determinism. It is difficult to take the dilemma by the horns or escape between them or rebut it. Dayā is neither won by effort nor forced on the jīva. If the problem is restated in terms of the S'ārīraka S'āstra and not of the Hetu S'āstra or logic, the distinction becomes philosophically negligible. Katāksa or grace is neither sahetuka nor nirhetuka. It is based not on the logical view of causality but on organic union. Mystic experience is alogical and amoral in the sense that it is more and not less than the logical and the moral, and it is illegitimate to apply logical and ethical terms to what is transcendent. The gift of grace and self-gift are vitally related like the systole and the diastole and are not causally connected and their relation involves reciprocity and responsiveness. The sucking of the mother's milk by the child is instincively related to the spontaneous secretion of milk and the two form an organic process in the maintenance of life. It is impossible to divide the unitive process and decide how much comes from the sesa and how much, from the s'esī. "You have got to deepen yourself in it or let it deepen itself in you, whatever phrase best expresses the fact to your mind." The jñānī is dearest to God, the sarīrin, and God is dearest to the jñānī the sarīra, and this organic relation defies logical analysis. Dayā pours itself fully into the self and the self flows irresistibly into dayā and it is undesirable to dissect this living flow into the logical categories of cause and effect.

<sup>1</sup> Bosanquet, What Religion Is, p. 21.

A comparison of the theories of redemption, Vaisnavite and Christian, reveals points of striking similarity as well as difference between the two and enables us to estimate their relative values for the religious consciousness. Redemption is deliverance from sin or papa and the attainment of God or Brahman; and so the meaning of sin or papa has to be ascertained before the definition of deliverance or moksa is attempted. Sin is not physical evil or suffering, though suffering may result from it as a penalty. Moral evil is the violation of the moral law of autonomy and it is a reproach to the self. The law is self-legislative, having its own dignity. Statutory religion appeals to the miraculous and the mysterious. It ministers to fear and superstition and substitutes magic for morality and affects the inner worth of life. To please God or the gods and win their favour by extra-moral methods is. however, alien to the spirit of true religion. Supernaturalism, with its anthropomorphic tendency, creates a magnified potentate or despot and thrives in an atmosphere of fear and credulousness and has often its nemesis in scepticism and irreligion. Morality, however, carries us into the very heart of reality when it seeks a sanction for its law of righteousness and accepts the faith in a moral ruler or nivantā who works in the hearts of all through goodness. The moral law on the religious level is known as dharma or duty, a divine command, and the violation of the command is called sin or papa. A good deed is better than a good intention; but an evil thought is worse than an act of wickedness, as it is an ancient inner perversity, which soils the soul itself and is a revolt against law. "We practise the evil which we would not and do not the good which we would, owing to the sin dwelling in us." The proneness to sin is regarded by Christianity as an inherent depravity or original sin which is inherited by us from the first man. Christianity holds that sin is radical and natural, that man is an eternal sinner and that his first disobedience has multiplied itself and tainted humanity. S'rī Vaiṣṇavism traces pāpa to human accountability and avidyā-karma which is anādi or causally inexplicable. The propensity to pāpa or sin is somehow there, but it is not original sin, as the ātman has the freedom to fall into sin or grow into godliness. The self is essentially pure and sin is only an accident. Sin is beginningless but has an end. Though as a moral fact sin is, in the religious realm it ought not to be. Every jīva is ultimately salvable and can attain mōkṣa. If the Lord cannot prevent evil and sin, He is not Almighty; if He can prevent it but will not, He is cruel. But it is the basic faith of redemptive religion that He can and will prevent evil and sin.

Deliverance from sin is the fundamental aim of religion and the hope of deliverance lies in the saving grace of the Redeemer and casting oneself on His mercy. If God is the cause of sin, deliverance from it would mean turning away from Him and not turning to Him as the Saviour. God is holy and amala or spotless and the sinfulness of sin is a measure of the holiness of the Holy. Legalistic religion thus exalts God by increasing the distance between the Holy and the sinner. But it depresses man and makes him conclude that redemption can never be secured by expiation. True religion is not juristic and its definition of God as the Saviour inspires the sinner with the assurance of deliverance. The belief in original sin or nitya-samsāratva and in predestination results in the redemptive faith in grace as a gratuitous gift of God. According to Augustine, grace works pre-veniently and lifts man out of sin, works co-operantly and makes him righteous and works irresistibly owing to the omnipotence of the divine

will. Gratia operans comes from God. Gratia co-operans is based on human will. But grace is not a supernatural force or energy emitted by the Lord and infused into the soul from without. Grace is not the infusion of the physical force that acts on the soul externally and effects a regeneration. Theologians of a different school therefore protest against the theory of supernatural force and insist on inner sanctification and justification by faith, as contrasted with justification by works and the remission of sin by confession. The two types of thought are represented in a different way by the doctrines of Thomism and Molinism. Thomism holds that the human will is predestined by God and consents to the divine influx. But Molinism is opposed to the view of predestination as it holds that the divine will is alongside of the human will and that grace has good use. The same contrast is stressed by the doctrines of pietism and mysticism. The former insists on the need for inner purification and, as a religion of the heart, it is opposed to ceremonialism and justification by faith. But it over-emphasises the subjective value of redemption and is individualistic in tone and temper. Mysticism has a leaning towards the idea of absolute grace and the downpour of divine love into the human heart. The Christian theory of the single birth of the self does not explain the moral injustices accruing in cases of unmerited suffering, and the idea of substitutionary or vicarious sacrifice and atonement does no justice to the law of retribution. The doctrine of the "One begotten Son" and the "Chosen people" is dogmatic and coercive and it does violence to the history of universal redemption and the working of divine mercy through different channels. Incarnation is the invasion into humanity of divine mercy in times of moral crisis and it is not just and adequate to explain redemption as the regenerative act of the only begotten Son of God suffering vicariously for the sins or the karma of humanity. Every  $j\bar{v}va$  is a son of man who bears the cross of his karma and, as the Son of God, has his sin destroyed by His  $day\bar{a}$ . Atonement for sin is really attained by the at-one-ment of bhakti. Sin is ultimately self-alienation from God and it stultifies itself by contact with krpā or grace; it is then destroyed and the sinner is transformed and reconciled to God. The historical sense is changed into the consciousness of eternal life. The Christian theory of wheat and chaff or election and eternal damnation conflicts with the doctrine of the universal Saviour. The Vaiṣṇavite view of sarvalōka saranya and the omnipotence of His dayā, whether absolute or self-limited by the  $j\bar{v}va$ 's karma, guarantees eventual salvation to all  $j\bar{v}va$ s irrespective of their social, religious and other differences.

The lives and teachings of the founders of Christianity and of S'rī Vaisnavism also bring out the points of resemblance and difference between the two religions, and emphasise the spiritual hospitality of the latter. They can be studied from three standpoints, viz., the supernatural, the historical and institutional, and the mystic. The supernatural Christ is the only begotten Son of God who worked many miracles as a Messiah to testify to the imminent advent of the Kingdom of The doctrines of the Immaculate Conception, the Resurrection, the miracles performed during the ministrations and the apocalyptic faith are beliefs or overbeliefs which cannot be tested by reasoning. The birth of Nammalyar at Tirunagari in the Tinnevelly District was also a divine occurrence and it was foretold by earlier prophets. His enlightenment under the tamarind tree (an avatar of Adi S'esa), the mystery of Madhurakavi Alvar, a wise seer, who was drawn to him from the distant north by a strange celestial light and who became his disciple; the prophetic vision of the succeeding ācārvas who formed the apostolic succession and the Vaisnavites of the white island 'S'veta Dvīpa' who heralded the destruction of Kali, are miraculous occurrences which bore testimony to the strange workings of God and His intervention with the natural order. But historic criticism distrusts such supernatural occurrences which are a breach of the uniformity of nature. The dogmatic faith that esse is credi and that miracles are designed to destroy atheism runs counter to the moral argument. Historic religion therefore dwells mainly on the narration of spiritual occurrences and the interpretation of their inner purpose. Jesus, from this standpoint, was only a historic person who was the descendant of David and Abraham, was baptised by John the Baptist and then went to the wilderness where he withstood the temptations of the devil and underwent a spiritual course. He then went from place to place preaching the advent of the Kingdom of God, gathered his twelve disciples to continue the ministration and was crucified on the cross after establishing the reign of love. The acts of the Apostles and the history of the church reveal their purpose of evangelisation and conquest of the world for Christ. The life of Nammālvār is a chronicle of his yogic experience under the tamarind tree for sixteen years, of his initiation into bhakti by his teacher, and of the remaining twenty years of his spiritual life spent in devotional experience. The outpourings of his bhakti in the form of Tamil songs are now regarded as Upanişad. This Upanișad, Drāvida Upanișad as it is called, was lost for a while and was recovered by the great yogin Nathamuni, who established the Vaisnavite tradition and started spreading the gospel of universal dayā among all persons. It was

continued by his apostolic successors such as Āļavandār, Rāmānuja, Pillai Lōkācārya and Vedānta Desika. This Vaiṣṇavite tradition is now growing into popularity throughout the country and outside it, in suitable forms, as the religion of redemption.

Historic and institutional religion has a tendency to uniformity and standardisation, and the form often kills the spirit. The mystic, who has faith in the personal experience of God, therefore, thinks of Christs and Nammalvars as specialists in spirituality and patterns of godliness. The real miracle is the moulding of the soul and the realisation of the Kingdom of God in the inner sanctuary of the ātman. Life, light and love are the real trinity, and self-gift to God and sharing the experience with others are the real vocation of the mystic, who intuits the truth "I live, yet not I but God in me". Nammāļvār was a born mystic sustained by the love of God and, as a super-prapanna, he extended the hospitality of his divine experience to the whole world of jīvas, with a view to establishing a spiritual community of bhaktas or mystics. Vaisnavism does not favour the monopolist mentality exhibited in the doctrine of "the chosen people of the God of Israel" and the "Judgment Day." From all the three standpoints S'rī Kṛṣṇa's teachings as contained in the Song on the chariot, (the Bhagavad Gītā) are more comprehensive and catholic than those of Christianity expressed in the Sermon on the Mount. Prapatti S'āstra, as the gospel of salvation, is designed by the Saviour to draw erring humanity to Himself, and wean them from their career of sin and sorrow. It is only this religion of dayā that is the solace of life and the solace of death, and has the highest claim to universality. Its definition of the absolute. while it includes the Upanisadic idea of Brahman and Isvara

and the Pancaratra idea of Bhagavan, exceeds them by its concept of dayanidhi. The Lord is rich in mercy and has not davā as His differentia but is davā itself and is therefore impersonal. Dayā is for dayā's sake, and is not the fruit of righteousness, and is therefore not juristic or moralistic. Davā is not a process of placating the holy wrath of God, and is not vindictive and retributive. It does not brook bartering at all by the arithmetical calculations of bunya-bāba and schemes of rewards and penalties. It does not connote forgiveness by instalments, as it is spontaneous in nature and instantaneous in effect. While philosophy expounds the nature of Bhagavān as the sarīrin of the jīva, Prapatti S'āstra defines dayā as the soul of Bhagavān Himself, as it is the source, sustenance and satisfaction of the divine nature. Davā dominates the creative urge of Isvara and is the underlying motive even in destruction.1 Creation therefore does not really groan and travail in pain, but is conceived in love. Forgiveness implies the forgetfulness of sin, and dayā therefore limits, so to say, the omniscience and foreknowledge of Isvara and changes the sarvajña (All-Knower) into avijñātā. Dayā dwells for ever as the inner ruler of the Self and enters into the heart of incarnation. It forces the cosmic ruler or Nārāyana to drive nara's chariot and from the chariot-seat to give utterance to the gospel of redemption. Redemption is not restricted by the distinctions of birth and status, and, in its universality of appeal, it extends to the jīvas even in sub-human bodies. The asura, that is steeped in cruelty and motiveless malignity, has as much chance of regeneration as the saint that follows the way of righteousness, if only there be a change of heart. Dayā is unaware of distinction, election and elimination, and runs counter to the doctrine of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Vedānta Des'ika's Dayā Sataka, 16 and 17.

the Judgment Day when the good are saved and the wicked are smitten and sent to hell. While in Christianity judgment follows redemption, in S'rī Vaisnavism justice is overpowered by redemptive love. Even in our human relations, we are commanded to render to no man evil for evil, but to bless them that persecute us; for evil is overcome not by evil but by good. "Love works no ill to anyone. Love is kind and never fails. It bears all things and believes all things. It is never provoked and takes no account of evil." Human love is but an infinitesimal expression of the tenderness and mercy of the Lord; and the religion of brabatti is the gospel of universal forgiveness. Kali is the age of confusion and carnal-mindedness, and the only way of salvation lies in the discerning faith in the saving grace of the saranya or Redeemer. No gospel is more inspiring than the  $G\bar{\imath}t\bar{a}$  call of  $day\bar{a}$  and its assurance of deliverance to all iīvas.

## CHAPTER XVII

## UBHAYA VEDĀNTA

SECTION I. THE RELIGION OF THE "S'RT BHASYA"

A N attempt was made in the preceding chapters to expound Visisṭādvaita as a philosophy of religion by exhibiting the synthetic unity of the metaphysical, spiritual and religious aspects of Vedānta (of tatva, hita and puruṣārtha) and gradually developing the philosophy of the prakāra or mode into the religion of bhakti and prapatti. The first two chapters of the Vedānta Sūtras form a metaphysical enquiry into the nature of sat as the supreme tatva or saguna Brahman: the third defines the nature of hita as vedana, upāsanā or bhakti, and prapatti, and the last brings out the meaning of purusartha as the attainment of Brahman. The essentials of this method are worthy of restatement in the present context. The ground of the existents is the only goal of experience (kāraṇantu dhyeya). Brahman is the root of philosophic thinking and the fruit of religious feeling and is the first cause and the final cause. The four chapters of the Brahma Sūtras reveal the synoptic insight of the Sūtrakāra and are a systematic elucidation of the truth step by step from the first Sūtra to the last. Each chapter of the S'ārīraka S'āstra is not merely a part or unit of the whole and a member of an organic unity, but is itself a selfcomplete whole. A fresh insight into the S'āstra is afforded by Mahāmmahopādhyāya Kapistalam Desikācāriar in his master-thought that every adhikarana or section is an anubhava or intuition of Brahman. What is metaphysically determined as the ultimate ground of all existence is also the supreme end of man's spiritual quest and yields a specific anubhava of the divine perfection. Each adhikarana aims not merely at logical satisfactoriness or coherence but also at spiritual satisfaction. This synthetic insight corrects the ordinary idea that the Vedānta Sūtras are a mere theoretic study of Visistādvaita and that the Bhagavad Visaya of Nammālvār embodies its practical aspect of spiritual experience and confirms the theory that Visistādvaita is Ubhaya Vedānta. It is the supreme merit of the Svāmin to have replaced the analytic method by the synthetic, and regarded each adhikarana as the spiritual experience of a Bhagavad guna or auspicious quality of Bhagavān in the manner of the ecstatic outpourings of Nammālvār. This chapter furnishes a brief summary of his exposition, which throws fresh light on the meaning of the term 'philosophy of religion' as it insists on the ultimate unity of philosophy and religion and the supreme truth that reality is realisable and that what is logically valid is also spiritually valuable. In his Vyāsa Siddhānta Mārtānda, the Svāmin shows that each adhikaraņa both proves a philosophic truth and is a spiritual anubhava or experience of an attribute of Nārāyaṇa. In his later work, the Adhikarana Ratnamāla, Nārāyaņa is equated with S'rīnivāsa. The Sūtras consisting of one hundred and fifty-six adhikaranas or sections are valued as one hundred and fifty-six gems of the perfections or kalyāṇa guṇas strung together by devotional art. The absolute of the Upanisad is equated with the supreme

Nārāyaṇa, the God of religion, and is finally identified with the Redeemer, S'rīnivāsa.

The first section called the Iksati Adhikarana refers to the Chāndogya text in Chapter VI, section ii, "Being only was this, in the beginning, one only, without a second. . . . It thought: May I be many, may I grow forth." From the metaphysical standpoint it sets aside the Sānkhyan view that bradhana is the cosmic ground, on account of the fact that intelligence can evolve and emerge only from the atman and not from matter, and establishes the truth that the sat without a second is Brahman or the Supreme Self. The one without a second is the metaphysical self and not the mathematical aggregate or whole of parts. By its self-creative urge, it wills to be the many and becomes the manifold of cit and acit and becomes their source and sessi. The absolute is Isvara and not Isvara, cit and acit, as the cosmic process is the selfdifferentiation of Isvara. From the religious standpoint the adhikarana is an anubhava or religious experience of the sat as the self of S'vetaketu. Brahman, the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe is the atman of the atman of S'vetaketu. The self that is the ground of the macrocosm is also the self of the microcosm. It brings out the Visistadvaitic truth that the Self of the external world is the Self of every finite self by setting aside the identity philosophy that makes māyā-bound Īsvara one with avidyā-ridden jīva. While the latter expresses logical identity, the former stresses spiritual intimacy. The world order as the expression of the creative urge of Brahman is really His līlā. The creative urge becomes an æsthetic impulse and is transformed into the religious motive of redemption. Soul-making is the sport of the raksaka and He shapes matter and moulds the soul

to make it His own. The next topic known as the Anandamaya Adhikarana discusses the Taittirīya text "Different from the self of vijnana is the other inner self which consists of bliss" and dismisses the view that the term anandamaya or the self of bliss is the jīva which is Brahman reflected in avidyā. The Sūtrakāra contends that the jīva cannot create the universe and that the infinite alone as the prakārin can have infinite bliss and not the finite self. Brahman is blissful and imparts its nature to the jīva. The Highest and the one who attains the Highest are not identical. S'ankara follows the Sūtra argument and then dismisses the conclusion of the Sūtrakāra by a sudden volte face by his theory of two Brahmans deduced from his own independent reasoning. This adhikarana expounds, from the anubhava aspect, the nature of the ecstasy of the unitive consciousness or brahmānanda. Brahman is the transcendentally blissful Being of beauty delighting in communicating His bliss to the bhakta, and enabling him to revel in the rapport of communion.

The third adhikarana known as the Antar Adhikarana rejects the anthropomorphic view that the shining self in the sun with a golden complexion and eyes like the lotus mentioned in the Chāndōgya Upaniṣad (I. vi.) is the jīva, as the quality of sinlessness referred to in the text pertains to the highest Brahman and not to Āditya. This distinction is clearly drawn in another Upaniṣad. "He who dwells in Āditya, whom the Āditya does not know, who rules Āditya from within." Brahman is a boundless ocean, as it were, of compassion and kindness and has a divine form (divyamangala

¹ tasmādvā etasmād vijñānamayāt! anyöntara ātmānandamayaḥ! Taitt. Up., Anand., V.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> ya āditye tişthan nādityād antarō yam ādityō na veda yasyādityas' s'arīram ya ādityam antarō yamayati. Br. Up. V. vii.9

vigraha) which He individualises to satisfy His devotees. In its anubhava aspect, the section refers to the Supreme Sinless Self with an aprākrta or transcendental form of His own whose ravishing beauty fills the yogin with ecstasy, even more than His svarūpa. The next section refutes the mechanical theory of the universe and concludes that the term akasa in the Chandogya text, (I. ix. 1), is not the elemental ether but refers to the Paramapurusa or Supreme Self as the world ground with an infinity of perfections, who is at once the supreme and the only way to life. The Jyōtir Vidyā in the Chāndōgya Upaniṣad, (III. xiii. 7) which explains reality as the jyōtis or light which shines above the heaven, higher than everything, refers not to physical light but to the Highest Self with infinite splendour. On the religious level, the section points to the existence of an absolutely luminous region of eternal bliss, in which the ineffably luminous being jyōtisām jyōtis or light of lights resides for ever, as distinguished from the phenomenal world of līlā vibhūti which expresses His sportive activity and redemptive joy. These opening adhikaranas or sections define the experience of Brahman as the creator or ground of existence, His blissful nature and His transcendental form or His svarūba, kalvāna gunas and rūpa, or paratva, bhogyatva and divyamangalavigrahatva. As these are brought out in order in the first three satakas of Nammāļvār's Tiruvoimozhi, the striking resemblance between the two is noteworthy. The last topic of the first part of the chapter proves that words connoting the jīva like Brahmā and Indra connote also by the principle of coordination or sāmānādhikaraņya the Supreme Self of which they are the sarīra. The meditation on Indra prāņa is the

šarvāņi ha va imāni bhūtānyākās'adeva samutpadyante ākās'am pratyastam yanti.— $Ch.\ Up.,\ I.\ ix.\ 1.$ 

meditation on Brahman, the sarīrin of Indra prāna. The real proof of the existence of Brahman is the experience of Brahman as in the case of Vāmadeva, Prahlāda and Nammālvār. The rsi Vāmadeva intuits Brahman as the inner self of all jīvas. The term 'I' means Brahman as its sarīrin when the rsi says: "I am Manu, I am Sūrya." Says Praḥlāda: "As the infinite one abides within all, He constitutes my 'I' also. All is from me. I am all, within me is all." 2 Nammālvār also realises that his true aham is Brahman as the life of his life. Brahman is the true 'I' of every 'I' in the universe and is its intimate meaning. Thus the first part of the chapter establishes the truth that Brahman is the Supreme Self other than *brakrti* and the *jīva*, is possessed of infinite auspicious qualities like bliss, and has a divine form of His own which is not due to prakrti and karma and that loving meditation on the Self as the self of one's self leads to the attainment of eternal bliss. The true philosopher as the seeker after Brahman has no use for materialism and anthropomorphism and as the seer of Brahman, he enjoys eternal bliss. The second section of the first chapter consists of six topics and it establishes the supremacy of Brahman as the sarīrin or inner self of all by ruling out the claims of the finite self. The first topic determines the meaning of the pantheistic text of the Chāndogya Upanisad, "All this is Brahman," and defines the nature of the Supreme Self as the atman of the universe but without even the shadow of its imperfections. The word 'all' in the text does not connote the totality or society of selves, as the determining quality of tajjalān or tajja, tadala and tadana,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> tad haitat pas'yan rṣir vāmadevaḥ pratipede aham manurabhavam sūryas'ca.—Bṛ. Up., III. iv. 10.

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  sarvagatvād anantasya sa evāham avasthitah l<br/> mattassarvam aham sarvam mayi sarvam sanātanell— $V\colon P$ ., I. xix. 89,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> sarvam khalvidam brahma tajjalān iti s'ānta upāsīta l—Ch. Up., III. xiv. 1.

in the context refers only to Brahman and not to the jīva. Cosmic evolution and involution cannot be due to the finite self. The universe is in Brahman, but is not Brahman as it cannot exhaust its spiritual content. Brahman is immanent in the universe, but is not affected by its imperfections. On the religious side, the adhikarana guarantees mukti or deliverance to the devotee whose mind is purified by meditation and freed from the opposites of raga and dvesa and equipped with the seven virtues beginning with viveka. Prahlāda realised Nārāyana as the Inner Self of all and attained samadars'ana or the sense of spiritual similarity and solidarity, by which he lost the egoistic consciousness of the distinction between friend and foe. In His infinite mercy, the Lord of Love enters the heart of the devotee and imparts to him the fragrant deliciousness of bliss. Brahman is the prāpya or the subject to be realised and the mukta is the prapta or one who realises it.1 The second topic applies the term 'eater' in the Kathopanisad 2 to the destructive aspect of Visnu which implies not extinction but reabsorption. Mukta-making or bringing deliverance to all is the purpose of *Isvara* and even the destructive function which makes a "condiment" of death itself arises from His redemptive impulse. When the jīva sinks into sensuality and sin, the merciful Lord temporarily puts a stop to the cosmic process and deprives the jīva of his instruments of sense-experience so that there may be no further incentive to evil, like a loving father who cures the insanity of his son by imposing restrictions on his physical freedom. The two selves that live together in the cave of the heart 3 are the finite and the infinite. The Upanisad

<sup>1</sup> Vide, the Rahasyatraya Sāra, ch. IV. end.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> yasya brahma ca kṣatrañca ubhe bhavata ōdane i mṛtyur yasyōpasecanam. —Kath. Up., I. ii. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Kath. Upan., I. iii. 1.

(I. ii. 12) affirms that the wise man who meditates on the Self who is hidden in the cave is rid of sorrow and refers to the distinctive attributes of the  $\bar{a}tman$  as the meditating subject and  $Param\bar{a}tman$  as the inner Self or object of meditation. This section has a deep religious significance and shows that the infinite Lord in His boundless tenderness is unable to bear the separation of His other self and therefore stations Himself in the heart of the  $j\bar{v}va$  with a view to leading him back to his highest abode. The aim of  $Ved\bar{a}nta$  is to reveal the divinity that lies concealed in the heart of all  $j\bar{v}vas$ .

The third topic expounds the meaning of the Upakōsala Vidyā in the Chāndōgya Upaniṣad (IV. xv. 1). The puruṣa within the eye is Brahman, the fearless and the immortal. The Sūtra eliminates the other alternatives, viz., that the puruṣa is the reflected self or pratibimba ātman, the jīva or a god, and affirms the truth that it is Brahman, on the ground that the attributes of samyadvāma, vāmanī and bhāmanī refer to the Highest Self. All blessings go towards Him; He leads all blessings and shines in all the worlds. Brahman is ka and kha of the Chāndōgva Upaniṣad (IV. x. 5) and is supremely blissful. In the anubhava aspect, Brahman as the Inner Self is eternally blissful and communicates bliss to the finite self and leads him gloriously to the world beyond.

The fourth topic throws light on the nature of Brahman as the antaryāmin, the Inner Ruler immortal, and on the organic relation between Brahman and the universe of cit and acit as sarīrin and sarīra. It strikes the key-note of Vedāntic thought and experience. The seventh section of the fifth chapter of the Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad develops the metaphysical truth that Brahman, as the immanent self of all the

worlds, of all living beings, all Devas, and all the Vedas, is their inner meaning. The Absolute Substance of the Sad Vidvā is the inner self of the Antaryāmi Vidyā and as the life of life, the seer of all the seers and the love of all loves, He constitutes the sarīrin of the universe in the collective and the individual aspects. This view alone reconciles the socalled monistic view of the Brhadaranyaka and the theistic teaching of the S'vetās vatara without torturing any text or twisting its meaning. The crass anthropomorphic idea of the sarīra-sarīrin relation as that between the mind and the body is refuted by the text: "He grasps without limbs, hears without ears and sees without eyes", which contrasts the knowledge of the All-Self with that of the jīva obscured by karma. When this Vedāntic truth is intuitively realised in religious experience, the self as a tissue of the sarīrin pulsates with its life, functions through its will and throbs with its love. The fifth topic points to Brahman as the aksara or the imperishable as defined in the Mundaka Upanisad (I. i. 5). The text refers to two kinds of knowledge, aparavidyā and paravidyā and prefers the latter as the higher kind of knowledge which consists in the immediate apprehension of Brahman as a suprarelational experience. The Upanisad concludes that Brahman is the imperishable Highest Self which is higher than the aggregate of individual jīvas which are themselves higher than the unevolved subtle elements. Brahman as the true of the true is higher than the jīva on account of distinction and difference or visesana and guna, while the jīva is itself higher than acit; this comparison relates to valuation and not sublation. The Advaitic theory of the absolute admitting of three kinds of reality or degrees of truth is not tenable. The absolute does

¹ apāņipādo javano grahītā pas'yatyacakşus sa s'rnotyakarnaḥ! —Sv. Up., III. 19.

not admit of kinds of reality, as reality is secondless. It does not admit of degrees of truth, as there can be no passage from degrees of truth to absolute truth. The real difference is not between existence and reality based on the criterion of noncontradiction but is between existence and value based on the principle of preference. There are stages in valuation from the sensuous side to the spiritual and to the religious consciousness. In its anubhava aspect, the Brahma Vidyā directs the aspirant to the practice of bhakti and prapatti as the supreme means of attaining oneness with Brahman or sāmyam. Brahman is identical with Vāsudeva who resides in all and from whom all derive their being and also Bhagavan with the six perfections comprising jñāna, bala, aisvarya, vīrya, sakti and tejas. Sāmya consists in attaining the likeness of Bhagavān. Spiritual and divine consciousness are similar in content but not identical in existence. The next topic is the Vaisvanara Vidyā of the Chāndōgya Upanisad (V. xi, et seq.) defining the meditation on Brahman as the Vaisvānara self having the three worlds for His body. Though Brahman is niravayava or formless, He is meditated upon in the form of a person; the Heavens are meditated upon as identical with the head of the highest Self, and the earth is meditated upon as constituting the feet of the Self. The cosmic consciousness of visvarūpa was divinely granted to Arjuna and he was so dazzled by its sublimity that he longed for the human form on account of its easy accessibility for devotion. In the Vaisvanara Vidya, the human form is infinitised and adored as the living symbol of the cosmic form and consciousness. The essential idea of bhakti is to intuit the infinite as the meaning and goal of the finite and thus enable the seeker after God to attain the world of Brahman. In this way, the Sūtrakāra establishes in the six adhikaranas of the second part of the first chapter, that Brahman is the All-Self, the inner ruler of all  $j\bar{\imath}vas$ , the infinite in the finite in the cave of the human heart, the source of its vision and the Supreme Self which is higher than the highest, and experiences these philosophic truths as spiritual excellences of Brahman.

The third part of the first chapter is devoted to the exposition of the truth that Brahman and not the finite self is the subject of enquiry in some other doubtful Upanisadic texts. The first topic establishes the conclusion that the Being described in the Mundaka Upanisad as the warp and woof of earth and heaven is the highest Self as the s'arīrin and not the jīva. "Him in whom heaven and earth, the mind and the vital airs are woven, know Him alone as the Self. He is the bund or setu of the immortal." It is an unfair criticism to say that Rāmānuja's view of Brahman as the sarīrin of all makes the soul of God the efficient cause and His body the material cause, and is like taking half a fowl for cooking and leaving the other half to lay eggs. This view misses the inner meaning of the Upanisad which expounds the nature of Brahman as the creator of the process of nature for the progress and perfection of the finite self. The relation of the finite to the infinite is really the crux of monism, and it cannot be solved by the crude pantheism that all is Brahman or by the acosmism of the illusion theory. The view that the absolute is an arithmetical whole, an organic unity or a concrete universal may have some affinity to the theory of bhedābheda, but has no relation to Rāmānuja's theory of the sarīrin, as this is only an analogical way of bringing out the spiritual intimacy between the finite and the infinite as jīvātman and Paramātman. Paramātman as the inner self

<sup>1</sup> Mund. Up., II. ii. 5.

of the jīva enters into the warp and woof of the world process with a view to spiritualising the jīva and finally Brahmanising it. This includes logical immanence and spiritual transcendence. Visistādvaita accepts the reality of all things and thinking beings but insists on a sense of proportion and distinguishes between the demands of the logical intellect for unity and the spiritual needs of union with Brahman. Brahman as the immanent ground of existence is the goal of transcendent experience. To dissect Brahman into two halves in the manner of cutting a fowl is to dissect life into dead bits. Mathematics has no place in mystic intuition. The Upanisadic analogy of the two birds on the same tree, of the shining one above and the suffering one below, becoming united in the end is more sublime and more appropriate than that of the fowl and its two halves. The infinite is in the finite self with a view to infinitising its content. The Upanisad defines Brahman as the abode of the universe and the bund of the immortal. The metaphysician who thinks of Brahman in the universe becomes the mumuksu who seeks the same Brahman beyond it. Therefore, in the anubhava stage, the arithmetical idea of the whole, the biological idea of the organism and the metaphysical view of a self or of a system give place to the mystic consciousness of God or brahmadrsti and attaining the world beyond, of Brahman or Isa. Even as the waters of the Ganges lose themselves in the sea, the finite self flows into Brahman by divesting itself of the differentiations of name and form due to karma and becoming one with Brahman by losing its separatist self-feeling, but not its self-existence.

The second topic declares that the infinite or the bhūman referred to in Chapter VII. xxiv. 1 of the Chāndōgya

Upanisad, beyond which there is nothing to be known is Brahman who is absolutely blissful. The Upanisad defines it thus: "Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, knows nothing else, that is Bhūman, the infinite. Where one sees something else, hears something else, knows something else, then that is alpa, the small." The Upanisad affirms that we can know Brahman, the absolute, and hope for its immortal bliss as the most beneficial end of life, and it leads the mumuksu step by step from "naming" up to "hoping" and concludes that the ativadin who seeks the more in the universe ends with the meditation on Bhuman as the supremely beneficial aim of life. Brahman is infinite bliss and when the devotee intuits Brahman as immanent in all beings, he does not see anything apart from Him and therefore experiences infinite bliss. The pleasures of the senses and the happiness of the cultured mind are only partial expressions of the bliss of Brahman. The world of phenomenal experience is essentially blissful as it is pervaded by the bhūman; but the finite self affected by avidyā in the form of karma has a fragmentary view of the world as, owing to its distorted vision, it sees apart from Brahman, and suffers from the sorrows of the divided consciousness. But the seer who has brahmadrsti or the intuition of the All-Self is immersed in the bliss of the bhūman. He revels in the Self and enjoys the universe as His aisvarya or wealth. The finite self connotes Brahman as its true self and this meditation on the bhūman leads to the attainment of brahmānanda. Thus the philosophic knowledge of the Bhūma Vidyā leads to the mystic experience of the bliss of the bhūman.

The third topic treats of the Akṣara Vidyā in the Bṛha-dāranyaka Upaniṣad (III. viii. 8-11): "The akṣara is neither coarse nor fine, neither short nor long; it is without colour or

shadow, without inside or outside; it eats none and none eats it. . . . . In that imperishable or aksara the ether is woven, warp and woof." The author of the Sūtras rejects the prima facie view that the imperishable referred to is pradhana or the jīva. While the previous meditations contemplate Brahman as the creator, destroyer and inner ruler of the universe, the Aksara Vidvā concerns itself with Brahman as its sustainer or support. It is the will or prasāsana of Isvara that controls the wheel of time, the uniform behaviour of the sun, the moon and the stars and thus sustains the physical and moral life of all jivas. This theory therefore rejects materialism as well as monadism and establishes the Upanisadic truth that Brahman alone is the Imperishable Lawgiver and Sustainer. "That imperishable is unseen but seeing, unheard but hearing, unthought but thinking. There is nothing else that sees, hears or thinks thus but it. In that Imperishable, the ether is woven, warp and woof." This description of the aksara as the All-Self excludes the jīva and the text therefore clearly states that Brahman is the sustainer of all beings. From the point of view of spiritual experience or anubhava, the Vidyā inculcates the worship of Brahman as the cosmic ruler or the father of all jīvas. The instinct of parental love, the political idea of the king and the state as the protector of the life and welfare of the subjects and the cosmic guardianship of the Manus and gods are very partial expressions of the divine will to support and sustain the world of cit and acit. The Father of all is not only in heaven, but is the inner Ruler. and His redemptive will is self-revealed both on earth and in heaven.

The key to a clear understanding of all the *Upaniṣadic* texts is furnished by the fourth topic of this part which refers.

to "He" or Brahman as the object of the highest intuition.1 Brahman as the sat is not the 'that' or reality beyond the "what" or idea, as such dialectic enquiry ends in ultimate doubts. Nor is it true to say that Vedānta has an idealistic foundation in self-consciousness as every idealism drifts towards subjectivism. The word 'He'remedies the defects of scepticism and solipsism and also rules out the reference to the collective self or kārva Brahman which is only a glorified but karma-ridden jīva. 'He' alone is to be meditated on and not the 'I' as the latter may lead in Vedāntic practice to the pitfalls of subjectivism. From the anubhava aspect, Brahman is higher than the highest in a world beyond the terrestrial and the celestial worlds and is alone the object of apprehension and attainment. Paramapada or the supreme abode transcends the sphere of karma, and the mukta enjoys the ecstasy of the intuition of Brahman in the world beyond.

The subject of enquiry in the fifth topic is the Dahara Vidyā of the Chāndōgya Upaniṣad (VIII) which enjoins the meditation on the 'ether of the heart which is the city of Brahman.' The Upaniṣad directs us to look within and seek for the subtle ether or daharākāṣa in the lotus heart which is the city of God or Brahmapuri. The adhikarana, by a process of elimination, excludes the two alternatives of the elemental ether and the spiritual entity being the objects of the prescribed meditation and concludes that the ether in the heart refers to the highest Brahman. The Upaniṣad ascribes to it eight perfections which imply freedom from evil in its physical, moral and metaphysical aspects in the well-known passage: "The self is free from

¹ sa pāpmanā vinirmuktah sa sāmabhir unniyate brahmalökam sa etasmāj jivaghanāt parātparam puris'ayam puruşam ikṣate.—Pr. Up., V. 15. Ikṣati karmavyapades'āt sah.—Ve. Su. I. iii. 13.

evil, old age, grief, hunger, thirst and death and its wishes are immediately self-realised." 1 To distinguish it from the freed self which has the same qualities, the Upanisad declares that the subtle ether contains both heaven and earth within it and is the abode of the whole universe; it is the Brahman who dwells in the self and rules it and whom the self does not know.2 Self-knowledge is essential to the meditation on Brahman and therefore the Upanisad requires the mumuksu to realise his true ātman as different from the empirical jīva in the three states of waking, dream and dreamlessness. While the atman is finite. Brahman is infinite and omnipotent. The predication of will to Brahman is in no sense a bar to His infinity, as He is absolutely free from the self-contradictions of the finite-infinite and even from a shadow of the imperfections of karma and punya-pāpa. Omnipotence is expressed in the absoluteness of His mercy. Out of His boundless love, *Isvara* sets aside His supreme glory and becomes easy of access to all jīvas by entering into their hearts. Within every jīva is hidden in the Brahmapuri the rich treasure of absolute truth, goodness and beauty. Blinded by karma, the finite self is unable to discover it. When the self is morally cleansed, it intuits itself, becomes serene and radiant with bhakti and reaches the resplendent region of everlasting bliss with the saving grace of its inner light.

The next topic is the Kathopanisad texts (II. iv. 12-13 and II. vi. 17) treating of the person of the size of the thumb standing in the middle of the self. The Sūtras state that the expression refers to the Supreme Self and not to the jīva, since the lordship or Isvaratva referred to in the context would

¹ eṣa ātmā apahatapāpmā vijarō vimṛtyur vis'ōkō vijighatsō apipāsas satyakāmas satyasankalpaḥ.—Ch. Up., VIII. i. 5.
² Ch. Up., VIII. i. 3.

apply only to Isvara and not to the jīva. The Upanisad (II. vi. 2-3) also declares that the whole universe is a cosmos and not chaos and its uniformity is not mechanical but is ordained by a being of infinite might and benevolence for fear of whom the sun shines, fire burns and the wind blows. The Upanisad enshrines the truth that Brahman rules the world from within and is the ultimate reason for the laws of thought and nature and is yet transcendental in His glory. Brahman transcends the limitations of prakrti and the jīva and is therefore nirguna and niravayava. None of the categories of space, time and causality which have a phenomenal use are adequate to describe the noumenal self. But the measureless enters into the world of space-time without losing its infinity for the purpose of meditation by the mumuksu. In His infinite mercy the Lord of love seeks the sinning self and dwells in its body in spite of its filthiness with a view to redeeming it from its sinful career. The last topic of the section is the Chāndōgya text (VIII. xiv. 1) that speaks of ether as the evolver of names and forms. This ether is not the elemental ether or  $\bar{a}k\bar{a}sa$  or the jīva but is Brahman. This is clear from the description given that He is the Lord of lords who rules the self even in the state of deep sleep. The thirty-two Vidvās expounded in the Upanisads are meditations on Brahman with the essential qualities of satya, jñāna, ānanda, ananta and amala and they all point to the realisation of Brahman as the summum bonum of life. It is thus shown that the 'logical' Highest of what may be called 'The Pure Visistadvaita' of the Sūtras is also the 'Intuitional Highest of the Practical Visistādvaita' of the Bhagavad Visaya. The next section shows the identity of the Intuitional Highest with the logical

¹ daharakuhare devastişthan nişadhvaradirghikā nipatitanijāpatyāditsāvatirņapitrkramāt |—Rahasyatraya Sāra, Chap. X.

Highest and thus justifies the view that Visiṣṭādvaita is Ubhaya Vedānta.

# SECTION II. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE "BHAGAVAD VISAYA"

Visistādvaita as a philosophy of religion not only interprets metaphysics in terms of religion and religion in terms of metaphysics, but equates the two by the common designation darsana. The term darsana connotes a philosophical system as well as a spiritual perception of reality and may be explained as an integral intuition of Brahman. The metaphysician thinks God's thoughts after Him and has a soul-sight of God as his very self. The rsis and the Alvars realised the existence of Brahman by directly experiencing Him and thus proved the truth that Brahman is the intuitional as well as the philosophical Highest. Their anubhava is justified by philosophic thinking. In extreme monism, Brahman is jñāna and is realised by jñāna; extreme theism distrusts the intellect and relies on scriptural faith. But in Visistādvaita Brahman can be enquired into as well as experienced. Conceptual knowledge of God is exalted by the soul-sense of God, and the soulsight of God is rationalised by conceptual knowledge. Iñana is inspired by bhakti and bhakti is illumined by jñāna and the two together constitute bhaktirūpāpanna jñāna. Thought melts into feeling and is verified by it, and feeling is illumined by thought and justified by it. This truth is well established by Rāmānuja as the philosopher-saint who integrated the experiences of the rsis and the Alvars and expounded them as one single coherent whole called Ubhaya Vedanta. As a philosopher-saint he established the truths of Visistādvaita as embodied in the Vedanta Sūtras and at the same time thought

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of each adhikarana as a Brahmānubhava or experience of the Brahman. As a saint-philosopher he intuited the truths of Tiruvāimoli and gave a critical exposition of the experiences of the Alvars by showing their logical coherence. As a saint, he contacted God and as a philosopher he proved the truths of spiritual experience.

The Bhagavad Visaya is the logical exposition of the spiritual experiences of Nammālvār just as the S'rī Bhāsya sums up the varieties of Vedāntic experience systematised in the Sūtras. The method in both is the same, though the former stresses the inductive side and the latter the deductive side. The entire system is explained in a twofold way as tatva-hita-purusārtha and arthapañcaka. The first of these can be explained as the co-ordination of the metaphysical, moral and religious aspects of experience, tatva, hita and purusārtha respectively. Arthapañcaka deals with the five truths of the philosophy of religion, namely, prāpya, prāptā, upāya, prāptivirodha and prāpti. The metaphysics of Vedānta treats of the Upaniṣadic way of knowing Brahman and the theoretic knowledge of Brahman as the Being that is the source of all beings. Vedāntic ethics deals with the hita or the means of realising the supreme tatva which consists in the moral and spiritual discipline of the mumuksu. The purusārtha or the supreme end is the realisation of Brahman and the attainment of eternal bliss in Paramapada. This method is elaborated in the arthapañcaka in a more concrete way. Brahman is the prāpya or the end to be spiritually apprehended and attained. The prapta is the jīva that seeks Brahman as its s'arīrī or prakārī. Bhakti and prapatti are the upāya or means of attaining Brahman, by ceaseless devotion or absolute self-surrender to the Lord. The chief obstacles to be overcome or prāptivirādha are avidvā-karma.

the evils of ahankara and mamakara or the concept of 'I' and 'mine'; the realisation of Brahman by ascending to His world is the prapti or the highest end to be attained. The Bhagavad Visaya as well as the Brahma Sūtras employ the same Vedāntic method, and use the same spiritual language. The first two chapters of the Sūtras determine the nature of the tatva, the third defines the hita and the fourth deals with the burusārtha. In the same way the first section of the Bhagavad Visaya is the meditation on the chief tatva or prāpya. The second section describes the hita or upāva and the last section the purusārtha or prāpti. Thus the beginning (upakrama) as well as the end (upasamhāra) is identical in both the systems. The end and aim of Ubhaya Vedānta is summed up in the Upanisad, "He who knows Brahman attains the Highest." Just as the whole teaching of the Sūtras is summed up in the first four Sūtras, the meaning of the entire Tiruvāimoli is epitomised in the four lines of the first verse itself.

The first commentary on the Tiruvāimoļi composed under Rāmānuja's direct guidance is the Ārāyirappaḍi. Of the later commentaries on both, "Īḍu muppattārāyiram" or "Īḍu" as it is popularly called is well known. It gives a psychological and logical account of the divine life of the Āļvār and traces the stages by which he realised Brahman and enjoyed the bliss of eternal kainkarya to Him. In the four works, the Tiruvīruttam, the Tiruvāsiriyam, the Peria tiruvandādi and the Tiruvāimoļi, the Āļvār describes the way in which he renounced worldliness, was drawn by the entrancing Beauty of the Lord and was caught up in the flaming love of Beauty. The Tiruvāimoļi expounds the art of divine life and love which consists in the descent of God into the self of the Āļvār, and the ascent of the Āļvār to His divine Home.

Judged from this standpoint, the spiritual experiences of the Alvar show how the grace of God transforms the Alvar into a mukta and through him the whole of humanity. The first section of a hundred hymns insists on kainkarya to God as the chief end of life. Bhagavān is the Supreme Lord who is ever adorable, accessible, holy and blissful and the saviour of all. The second analyses kainkarya and concludes that kainkarya is only for His satisfaction, without any taint of egoism. In the third stage, kainkarya has an extended meaning as it finds its completion in Bhāgavata kainkarya or service to all godly men, irrespective of their birth or status. The fourth part traces the way in which the obstacles to divine life, like the temptations of aisvarya and kaivalya, are surmounted. The fifth is justification by the faith that the Lord Himself removes these hindrances. The sixth section is an important stage in spiritual life as it defines prapatti as the only way to God and the whole attitude of devotion is consummated in prapatti. But mukti is not yet in sight in spite of prapatti and the Alvar portrays his feeling of dejection in the seventh section. The eighth is an account of the purificatory value of such disappointment as it leads to further self-naughting and introversion, and increases the hunger for God. Dejection is soon transfigured into hope and it makes love an irrepressible longing. The tenth section is a glowing account of the. glorious ascent of the Alvar to his divine home and the attainment of the bliss of Brahman having its fruition in kainkarya.

Vedānta Desika who was a specialist in *Upaniṣadic* knowledge was so deeply influenced by the soul-stirring outpourings of Nammāļvār that he styled them as *Dramidō-paniṣad* and even preferred them in some respects to the *Upaniṣads*, owing to their direct spiritual appeal. The

Tiruvāimoļi as Vedāntic experience has more value to the mumuksu than mere metaphysical exposition. This truth is well brought out in the definition of the nature of Brahman in the Brahma Sūtras and in the Tiruvāimoli. While the former starts with the definition of Brahman as the cosmic ground, the latter begins straightway with the description of Brahman as beautiful and blissful, and these qualities have more value to the seeker of Brahman than the cosmological idea. Upanisadic Vedānta is the enquiry into Brahman as the first cause of all, with a view to knowing Him as the final cause and the goal of life: but in Dramida Vedānta, the experience of Brahman is the primary aim, and the metaphysical view is deduced from it. It is in the light of this immediate intuition of Brahman that Vedanta Desika expounds the meaning and value of the religion of Alvar and extols it as the Dramidopanisad. The whole teaching of the Tiruvāimoli is summarised by Vedānta Desika in his Dramidōpanisat Sāram and Dramidopanisat Tātparya Ratnāvalī. The first section of the Tiruvāimoli consisting of the first hundred verses defines Brahman as the Supreme Self that alone is adorable and attainable. What is adorable is also blissful, and the second section or hundred therefore further characterises Him as the Blissful. The Beautiful can never be formless or niravayava and the third hundred describes Him as having an aprākrta form of bewitching beauty. But such beauty and love may also induce the devotee of God to seek the hedonistic pleasures of aisvarya or the spiritual joys of kaivalva. As they have no charm for the Alvar, he as a jñanī seeks Him in the next two sections of the Tiruvāimoļi as the supreme end of life as well as the giver of that good. By stripping himself of ahankāra and with his faith in the saving grace of the Redeemer, the Alvar in the sixth section practises prapatti. Finding that his prapatti bears no fruit, he at first thinks of the

cruelty of God in subjecting him to further hardships in the world of samsāra, but very soon, in the course of the next section, the assured faith that the Lord is the saviour of all who are heavily laden and afflicted asserts itself. The eighth section describes the redemptive love of God who is drawn by love and dwells for ever in the heart of devotees with a view to saving them from sin and requires of them nothing more than a change of heart. The ninth gives the final definition of God as the eternal friend and companion of the mumukṣu and the tenth and last hundred marks the completion of the spiritual progress of the Ālvār and the attainment by him of the eternal bliss of Brahman in Vaikunṭha. In this way, the Tiruvāimoļi teaches the truth that Bhagavān is Himself the prāpuka and the prāpya, the upāya and the upeya.

The first Tiruvāimoļi consisting of ten verses sums up the teaching of the whole work and is a typical philosophic poem setting forth the essentials of Visiṣṭādvaita. The first verse defines the nature of Brahman as saguṇa with transcendental bliss (uyarnalam) as the essential quality and with a beauteous form of His own. The second states that He is different from cit and acit and has a self-luminous nature of His own. The two thus refute the view that Brahman is nirguṇa and niravayava and conclude that Brahman is jīvavisiṣṭa Paramātman. The third stresses the immanence of Brahman in all sentient and non-sentient beings and affirms the intimacy between the ātman and Paramātman. The universe without this underlying unity would become a

<sup>1</sup> Ittham sevyam subhögyam s'ubhasubhagatanum sarva bhögya prakṛṣtham, s'reyastaddhetubhūtam prapadanasulabham svās'ritāniṣthajiṣnum l bhaktaccandānuraktam nirupadhisuhṛdam sat padavyām sahāyam devas' s'rīman svasiddheḥ karanam iti vadan nekam artham sahasre, sevyatvādin das'arthān pṛthag iha s'atakair vakti tatsthāpanārtham l

multi-verse or chaos. All beings with their infinite variations have their source in Brahman and their functions are centrally controlled by Him and yet Brahman is beyond. These verses repudiate pluralism and monadism as well as pantheism. The ninth and the tenth verses are directed against the s'ūnyavādins who deny everything. Denial has its function in reality and cannot be of reality and every denial presupposes an affirmation. Existence is implied even in the denial of all existence. But the most important verse is the seventh as it is the coping stone of the whole system. The truths of transcendence and immanence are explained in the light of sarīrātmabhāva and Bhagavān is described as the sarīrin that sustains and controls cit and acit. They have no existence apart from Brahman and they are only for His satisfaction. Brahman is the dhāraka, niyāmaka and sesī of both cit and acit. The ātman pervades the self as its sarīrī and is therefore accessible to it and attainable by it. Thus in this first Tiruvāimoli Nammālvār summarises the teaching of the thousand verses and the truths of the S'ārīraka S'āstra.

The opening verse itself strikes the keynote of the whole philosophy of the *Tiruvāimoļi* and by knowing it, the meaning of the whole can be known. It gives in a nutshell the central truth of *Visiṣṭādvaita* in the light of the traditional method of tatva, hita and puruṣārtha and the fivefold method of arthapañcaka. The term uyarnalam in the first line defines the supreme tatva or prāpya as Brahman the absolutely Blissful in the manner of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad. The hita or upāya by which Bhagavān is attained is indicated by the very suggestive term in the second line, namely, matinalam or bhaktirūpāpanna jūāna or intellectual love of God. When

<sup>1</sup> udal mis'ai uyirenak karandu engum parandulan,—verse 7.

iñāna is exalted by bhakti and bhakti is lighted up by iñāna. the two are glued together as a single unity and their full significance is brought out by the term toludu indicating absolute self-surrender to the raksaka. Really He is Himself the upāva and the upeva. The mumuksu is blessed with mukti and is no longer subject to the ills of samsāra as pointed out by the term tuyararu. Brahman who is perfect (pūrna) makes the jīva perfect. The true idealistic method of Vedānta is its philosophic passion for unity and simplicity. "To idealise is to essentialise." Knowledge according to all schools is epitomised in the word of truth known as the pranava which is made up of the three initial letters of the first three lines of the first verse. In this way the expounders of Ubhava Vedānta establish the truth of the synthetic philosophy of Rāmānuja that the aim of the S'rī Bhāsya and the Bhagavad Visaya is identical. that the foundation of the Brahma Sūtras is the intuition of the seers of Brahman, and that the intuition of the Alvars falls into line with the system of Vedānta.

#### CHAPTER XVIII

## THE MYSTICISM OF VISISTADVAITA

FACH philosophy or school of thought—eastern or western-has its own mystics in whose lives and utterances the system finds support and verification. But it is not every system that can claim mysticism as an appropriate branch of its tenets or doctrines. Though mysticism has now been given a high rank in some philosophic treatises and in spite of there being several treatises written on mysticism itself as a separate subject, its true meaning is still shrouded in mystery. It is the purpose of this chapter to obtain a clear notion of what true mysticism is, and to demonstrate how Visistādvaita alone, among all the schools of philosophic thought, is an appropriate and fit system for mysticism to flourish in. What is mysticism? One can easily start by pointing out what mysticism is not. It is not magic, mystery-mongering or siddhi-seeking. It is entirely different from occultism and spiritualism, and from psycho-analysis and the experiences of subliminal consciousness. The true mystic rejects the values of supernatural powers and yogic siddhis as he seeks God and only God. Visions and voices, photisms, auditions and automatisms may simulate spiritual experience but they do not lead to God; rather they lead away from Him. William James has proved conclusively the theory that mystic experience is not the aberration of a diseased mind as explained by the medical materialist, but is a genuine experience of God, which illumines the intellect, purifies the will and exalts the feeling. To identify mysticism with feeling is to ignore its supersensuous and supra-rational character. While sense-experience is fragmentary or is merely sentience below the level of relational experience, inference is mediate. The intuitive insight of the mystic is immediate and ineffable. God is intuited and not inferred, and He can be contacted directly though He cannot be categorised. But the intuition of God is not mere feeling or emotion. The view that it leads to emotionalism and erotism and is bereft of the sanity and serenity of the  $j\bar{n}\bar{a}n\bar{i}$  mistakes the dynamic flow of spirituality or God-intoxication for sensual revelry and narcotic excesses.

Vedāntic anubhava or experience does not mean the 'feelings and acts of individuals in their solitude so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine.' It is the integral experience of the whole atman and not of its sectional states. The subjective feeling has its foundation in the impersonal truths of sastraic revelation and is not a mere psychological experience. The word intuition is often so vaguely and loosely employed that it may mean any state of consciousness, from mere feeling or sentient experience which is below the level of relational thought, to supra-sensuous and supra-rational states above relational consciousness. It is too vague for clear understanding and is therefore without definite significance. It should not be confused with the immediacy of sense-experience as it is supra-mental, nor is it intellectual love as it transcends the limitations of tarka or the logical intellect. While the knowledge given in sense-perception is fragmentary and inferential knowledge is mediate, intuitional insight is an immediate experience of Brahman. Intuition reaches the heart of reality and carries deeper conviction than bratyaksa and anumana, or sense perception and inference. Brahman is directly intuited by the divine eye granted to the freed self and is not logically proved. The view that saguna Brahman is the logical highest creates a dualism between thought and intuition, and is not consistent with the facts of mystic experience and scriptural integrity. The experience of Brahman or brahmānubhava is unaware of the antithesis between thought and reality, or that between the what and the that, as it is the direct apprehension of the svarūpa or form of Brahman and the comprehension of its character or guna. The term brahmānubhava is, on the whole, preferable to the terms mysticism and intuition, owing to the definite meaning fixed by tradition and the recorded experiences of rsis and  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}rs$ .

The mumukṣu as a mystic has an organic craving¹ for Brahman and he longs for love or bhakti² and not merely for the negative state of mukti or freedom from the sorrows of samsāra. Even the infinite glory of Vaikunṭha has no attraction or value for him³ if it be merely an escape from samsāra without contacting God and enjoying the bliss of communion with Him here and in this life. The mystic has the instinct for the infinite and to him the best proof of the existence of Brahman is the immediate experience of Brahman, a soul-sight of the Self here and now and a revelling in His love. With his genius for God, the bhakta has no use for soulless ritualism and arid dialectics: a famine-stricken

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Tiruvāimoļi, III. viii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Alavandār, Stotra-Ratna, 54.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Vedānta Des'ika, Varadarāja Pañcās'at, 49.

ryot who longs for rainfall is not satisfied with the weather chart. The intuition of Brahman consists in the bhakta crossing the frontiers of dialectic and divided thinking, and in losing himself in the immensity of the intregral experience. The experience of God is the finite-infinite relation of love. which on the divine side is the invasion of love into the heart of the finite self, and on the human side is an intellectual love of God known as bhaktirūpāpanna jñāna or in Tamil matinalam. Bhakti is the thought of God touched by feeling and turned into devotion. Jñāna deepens into bhakti and bhakti is exalted by jñāna; and the two are fused together as premā. While philosophy seeks the unity of reality, and religion refers to the union of the jīva with Brahman, mysticism expresses the intense yearning, or ava, hunger for the Absolute which is the fusion of inana and bhakti. Inana and bhakti can be distinguished but cannot be divided; and the two together find their consummation in divine love, which in its highest stages bursts the bounds of artificial restraint and becomes a deluge of ecstasy. Intense love towards God or peravā is the consummation of thought and the exaltation of feeling; and the charges of intellectualism and sentimentalism cannot apply to a spiritual state which is more than thought and feeling. Mysticism as the experience of God-intoxication cannot fully thrive in the theistic atmosphere of absolute difference between the omnipotence of the creator and the impotence of the creature, nor in the rarified region of pure consciousness devoid of content. The mystic delights in communion with God, and not in the surrender of will, or in the negation of thought.

The various stages by which the logical ego, as a visesana of Brahman, gradually evolves into the mystic, thirsting for

God is worthy of restatement. The metaphysically-minded Visistādvaitin thinks of the iva as the adjective or element of the absolute or Brahman, deriving its life from the whole. As a moralist or ethical ego, the jīva is not a visesana but a person depending on the redemptive will of Isvara as the cosmic Ruler or sesz. When the ethical ego is drawn by the beauteous form of Bhagavān, it changes into the aesthetic self and the sesi becomes sundara. The self then is stripped of ahankāra and becomes the sarīra of the All-Self. As a bhakta he longs for the love of Bhagavān and as a brahanna he surrenders his will absolutely to the Raksaka and effaces himself in kainkarva. When love generated in bhakti and brabatti becomes a longing, the bhakta or brabanna pants for God and pines away. The soul-hunger of God is equally intense and the brakarin becomes a brakara longing for communion with the jīva as His very self or ātman. The relation between the two is changed from the logical, the ethical, the aesthetic and the religious into the mystic love between the lover and the beloved, and it is the aim of Visistādvaitic mysticism to reach the heart of love and to feel directly its inner pulsations.

The Vedāntic theory of Brahmajñāna may be reinterpreted and summarised in the light of the mystic experience of Brahman as alogical, amoral and supra-personal. The intuition of the mystic as rsi or Ālvār is alogical in the sense that it is the completion of the logical realm and not its sublation. After a laborious discipline in the exercise of the logical intellect, there comes a stage in the spiritual life of the seeker when he sees truth, as it were, in a flash. Truth possesses him, so to say, and the tools of knowledge are used only to explain the intuitive experience. Intuition is the

immediate or direct experience of Brahman, but it presupposes strenuous intellectual discipline acquired in the lower realms of knowledge. The knowledge given in sense perception should be clear, precise and free from bias. But even so, it is piecemeal and not capable of scientific explanation in terms of cause and effect. In the next higher stage, the particulars of sense are systematically explained as elements of an interrelated unity. Philosophy is thinking things together in their wholeness with a view to discovering their underlying unity. But even philosophic knowledge is fragmentary and abstract, as its account of reality is purely conceptual. Philosophical systems are conflicting and contradictory and have no finality. It is only when philosophic thinking which works with limited categories is perfected in mystic insight that the riddles of reason can be solved. Then intellect is illumined by divine vision and melts into ecstasy. The mystic anubhava of Brahman is not sentient or infra-rational experience, but is supra-rational and is the crown and completion of the different realms of knowledge given in sense-perception, science and philosophy. Mystic experience is not mere feeling or thought, but is an integral experience which includes both these elements and transcends their limitations. The view that Vaisnavism encourages emotionalism and erotism and fosters in man the soft passivity of the feminine nature ignores the value of jñāna and bhakti as stepping stones to mukti and not as stopping places. When the devout seeker subdues the emotions in the light of reason, emotion and intellect become one. Love is for love's sake and it knows no fear and seeks no favour. God is the Lord of love and every jīva has a humane nature nurtured by love and the restless adventure of love's game goes on till the two—the lover and the beloved -are united for ever. The bliss of such union is not the result of emotionalism and is entirely free from the taint of sensuality and sin. It also transcends the limits of philosophic thinking as thought expires in enjoyment. Intuition or tatva darsana is the consummation of the logical intellect or tarka drsti. The mystic experience of Brahman is full, perfect and free from the limitations of intellectualism and is therefore alogical.

The criticism that Vedāntic mysticism does not promote the ends of individual and social morality but encourages inertia and passivity cannot apply to Visīstādvaita. It is not a world-denying religion which favours the unhealthy ascetic view that life is rather to be shunned than lived. The mystic hungers and thirsts for God, feels the life of God in the depths of his being and is absorbed in ecstasy. He shakes off the ego-centric standpoint and self-centredness and surrenders himself to the Absolute. Mystic life is enriched by self-surrender as it enhances personal worth by partaking in the riches of the divine life. The self dies to live and it is deified by contacting God and entering into eternity. Its other-worldly attitude evolves from life here and now and is not a revolutionary change from illusoriness to enlightenment. The mysticrealises that he is only an instrument of the divine will and the basis of all his activity is shifted to God as the All-Self and Cosmic Actor (krtsnavit and krtsnakrt). By attuning himself to the will of God and thus becoming one with Him, the mystic transcends the individualistic standpoint and the moral distinctions of good and bad or punya and pāpa. His life is supra-moral in the sense that it is the crown and completion of the moral life. God is absolutely good and is not morally indifferent, and the chief quality of God is transmitting Hisgodliness to His other and making him perfect. Saintliness.

and unrighteousness can never co-exist. Personal worth is enhanced by self-effacement and self-gift. When the lower self of ahankāra is renounced, the ātman is deified and its highest values of truth, goodness and beauty are conserved. It then sheds its exclusive feeling and realises the unitive consciousness. The mystic reaches the heights of moral and spiritual consciousness, partakes of the riches of divine experience and sees all beings in God and God in all beings. On the moral level there is progress towards ideals, but in mystic or amoral experience aspiration is crowned with achievement. Morality is at best a struggle to reach the ideal of goodness. But there comes a stage in the spiritual life of the aspirant when he has no longer to seek the good but becomes goodness itself. Thus the amoral is the fulfilment of the moral life and not its negation. Visistādvaita does not encourage the method of self-extinction ending in the stirless rest of nirvāņa, but insists on spiritual activism and the fulness and freedom of deified consciousness. Spirituality is perfected in service, and mystics like Nammālvar and Prahlada work ceaselessly for the welfare of all beings till they attain a direct realisation of Brahman.

The Visiṣṭādvaitic philosophy of love is enshrined in the Maitreyī Brāhmana of the Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad which says that a husband is dear not for the love of the husband but for the love of the Self. An object is dear to one's self not for its own sake, but for the love of the Self. Maitreyī renounces wealth and other earthly possessions and seeks immortality, and the sage Yājñavalkya, her husband, intimates to her that the only means of obtaining immortal love is the knowledge of the Supreme Self. Brahman is perfectly blissful and imparts its bliss to different

beings according to their karma. Human love is a perishing feeling, but is a fractional expression of the infinite love of God. Love of home, love of country and love of humanity are not to be inhibited, as they are but partial revelations of divine love. Kāma may be of three kinds, viz., viṣaya kāma, ātma kāma and Bhagavat kāma. Love or kāma is by itself neither good nor bad, and its value depends upon the object desired. Visaya kāma is desire for the objects of sense, and its satisfaction is momentary and fraught with pain in all its stages.1 As the pursuit of sensual pleasure, it is an adventure which lands one finally in the wilderness of samsāra. One has then to retrace one's steps and follow the way of ātma kāma by self control and introversion. The joy of self-realisation is enduring, but it arises from the flight of the alone to the alone, and being a state of solid singleness it is tinged with egoism. Baghavat kāma or Paramātma rāga is love directed to the Lord who is the source and centre of all human love. When kāma or rāga is spiritualised and directed Godward, it loses its sting and is reckoned a virtue. If kāma as sexual feeling is not humanised, it is bestial and blind. clamant and chaotic, and becomes a deadly vice. But when it is idealised and disciplined into married love, selfishness disappears, and the fleeting voluptuousness of reckless adventure is replaced by the lasting happiness of perfect pleasure. If it is further spiritualised into divine love, it loses all traces of selfishness and becomes ethereally ennobled. Kāma is the urge of love. But as Bhagavat kāma, it is a craving for spiritual marriage with the Beloved. Love is a relation between the atman and its eternal other, and is a longing for a communion which is not infected by self-contradiction. When

 $<sup>^1\,</sup>du\hbar kham\overline{u}la,\,\,du\hbar khamis'ra$  and  $du\hbar kh\overline{o}darka$  or originating in pain, mixed with pain and causing pain.

it becomes an infinite longing for the Infinite, as in the case of Maitreyī, it leads to immortal bliss. While human love is fleeting and perishing, divine love is deathless and has eternal value.

Brahmānubhava may be mystically explained by the experience of love and beauty and this experience is treasured up in the Bhāgavata and the Bhagavad Visaya. Their aesthetic philosophy of Brahman has a soul-stirring appeal to the mumuksu, an appeal which remains unsurpassed in mystic literature. To the mystic, the tatva is Brahman the Beautiful, the hita is premā and the realisation of the bliss of Brahman is the purusartha. Premā is thus the spiritual copula between the knowledge of Brahman and the realisation of its bliss. The Bhāgavata is the homeland of divine līlā (prēma rasa) and the Tiruvāimoļi, the outpouring of Saţakopa, the God-intoxicated Alvar, is the spiritual biography of the eternal game of divine love. The mysticism of Nammāļvār is the heart of Visistādvaitic wisdom, and it furnishes the raison de etre of its metaphysics. Nammālvār is a seeker after Brahman and seer; he is the prophet of universal salvation. His Tiruvāimoļi begins with the definition of Brahman as bliss (I. i. 1) and ends with a glorious description of the attainment by the  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}r$  of that eternal bliss.

Brahman is defined philosophically as the Lord of Bliss or the aesthetic Highest, and is finally realised in *mukti* as the intuitional Highest. To the  $\bar{A} \underline{l} v \bar{a} r$ , the Absolute who is the heart of logic is also the Beautiful who satisfies the logic of the heart; and metaphysics ends in mysticism. Brahman is  $\bar{a} n a n d a a n d r a s a$ . The universe has its source and sustenance only in the bliss of Brahman. It is the theatre of the  $l\bar{a} l \bar{a} \bar{a} n a n d \bar{a} n a n d a n$ 

of God which aims at turning men into muktas. Though love is a unitive experience, it presupposes the duality of the experiencing subjects. The sat without a second, as ekākī, or the one that remained alone in the pralaya state, was joyless, and therefore it divided itself into finite centres and loving beings and entered into them as their pervasive inner Love (Brhad. Upan., III. iv. 3). Love does not thrive in loneliness or self-identity, as it takes two to love and be loved. Love involves otherness and even in the highest states of bliss, when the self-feeling is effaced, love is a dual relation and a double fruition. The absolute is love. Brahman. the ekākī experiences creative joy by self-giving and love and becomes complete only by self-division into loving pairs. The one Self that is without a second sports as two, as the lover and the beloved, without losing His wholeness. The dialectician who sees nothing but self-contradiction in the act of creation, as it involves, according to him, the non-relational entering into relations, misses the whole point of the Upanisad. The blissful Brahman in its sportive act of love separates itself from its beloved other, seeks it, and then becomes one with it. The Absolute itself assumes a bewitching form of beauty in order to attract its other to Itself.

To the mystic, Reality is not a problem but is realisation itself; and Nammāļvār, the super-mystic of S'rī Vaiṣṇavism, is so deeply intoxicated by divine love that he has no other thought or feeling than that of God. Kṛṣṇa alone satisfies his organic cravings of hunger, thirst and pleasure. The instinct for the Infinite alone preserves his being. The transcendental Brahman beyond the world equally seized with soul-hunger incarnates into the heart of humanity without

<sup>1</sup> Tiruvāimoļi, VI. vii. 1.

abandoning His holiness and glory. This mutualness results in the game of love, a game devised by the divine Artist to transmute the karma-ridden jīva into a mukta. The reciprocity of love leads to irresistibility by the mystic process of samslesa alternating with visilesa, the systole-diastole movement of premā bhakti. The former is the joy of contacting the entrancing beauty of Bhuvana Sundara, and the latter the sorrow of separation from Him. The inani turns his vision to God and focusses his love on Him as his atman. God likewise longs for the jñānī as His ātman! Excess of bremā transforms the jñānī into a spiritual bride pining for her lord. The symbolism of marriage embodies the secrets of the soul's longings and its self-giving joys. In visleşa, each moment stretches into eternity,3 but in samslesa eternity is crowded into a moment. In the former case the mystic pines away owing to the feeling of unrequited love and becomes pale and passive. In the latter, the soul is caught up to God and has a momentary joy of union or ecstasy. This opposition is known as the mystic paradox and its object is the transmutation of the earthly self into the godly by a process of spiritual alchemy. The like alone seeks the like; love alone calls for love. Like gold in the refiner's fire, the self is purified and deified by alternate depressions and exaltations. At one time, it is thrilled by His touches; at another, it is torn away from Him and languishes. In mystic philosophy both are the essential elements of love and the dualism between the two is overcome by the attainment of unitive consciousness. Nammāļvār passes through this process of samslesa and vislesa till he becomes one with the Beloved and enjoys the eternal bliss of such communion.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Gītā, VII, 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Tiruvāimoļi, V. iv. 3.

In vislesa, the joy due to the intimate presence of the Lord and His beatific vision is swept away, and the dark night of forlornness or deprivation sets in. Sin in this state is not the violation of the divine law but the ego-centric feeling and the sense of separation from the beloved. The renouncement by the self of the 'me' and 'mine' is the sine qua non of spirituality; and self-love and sensuality are rooted out.1 The spiritual quest for the Lord ripens into the mystic thirst for Him. The woes of visilesa experienced by Nammāļvār and expressed through the medium of nāyakīnāyaka love, or the love of the lover and his beloved, are unmatched in mystic literature for their moving power. While samslesa is the spring season when love blossoms, vislesa is the desolation of winter when the grace and the glow of love fade away, and life becomes dreary and desolate. It is a state of spiritual lassitude, or ennui and pallor, aroused by a sense of unworthiness, blankness and impotence, which is known in the language of mysticism as the dark night of the soul.2 The absence of God leads to the feeling of utter emptiness and helplessness; and nothingness takes the place of the fulness of the orison of union. The self-feeling is wiped out and the Alvar drops into passivity by the growing feeling that he really has, does, and is nothing. Reaction soon sets in and passivity changes into an invasive and assaulting mood. Love takes the offensive and becomes flaming and fierce, and, in the agony of disappointment and despair, the Alvar, consumed by the intensity of his love threatens to do what is technically known in Tamil poetic convention as madal ūrtal, in which the nāyakī charges the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> nir numadenrivai ver mudal mäittu.—Tiru., I. ii. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> ürellām tuūji ulagellām naļļirulāi nīrellānteri örniļiravāi niņdadāl.—*Tiru.*, V. iv. 1.

truant lover with desertion, rebukes and exposes publicly his cruelty and treachery. When love's labour is lost, by not being responded to, its fierceness bursts all artificial bounds and the lover is publicly chid for his faithlessness. Vaisnavite mysticism transforms the monistic view of Isvara as the archillusionist into that of the elusive enchanter of souls as jara cōra sikhāmani, the cunning and thievish Lord of Love who steals away the hearts of devotees and ravishes them out of all their feeling of fleshliness. The Māyin is the cunning artist who allures the self by His beauty, transfigures its lusts of the flesh into holy love, and by a strange alchemy makes it His own. The divinely mad Alvar is consumed by Krsna prema and every sense organ pants for contacting Krsna.1 The medical materialist and the worldly man steeped in sensuality may ascribe this mystic genius for God to the morbidity of hysteria or psychopathic degeneration. But a drop of divine love is the only cure, the rasāvana (elixir) that removes the ills of samsāra; and the Alvar, caught up in supernal love, adopts the experiential standpoint and appeals to the rationalist and the sceptic to discern the meaning of spiritual rapport with his spiritual outlook.2

While thus pining away, the  $\overline{A} lv\bar{a}r$  gets a sudden glimpse of God, and feels a strange joy sweeping over him. It is but a glimpse and mental vision or trance which is physically imperceptible and lacks sensory vividness and substantiality. Unsatisfied, the  $\overline{A} lv\bar{a}r$  yearns for the aesthetic enjoyment of his outer senses. He longs for physical contact with the divine beauty; and realising that his vision is only a sensory image resulting from intense mono-ideistic love or  $man\bar{o}bh\bar{a}va$ , swings back to the mood of depression and relapses once again into

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See mudiyane.—Tiru., III. viii. 1.

² yenneñjināl nōkkikkānīr.—Tiru., V. v. 2.

passivity and emptiness. Once again he reproaches his beloved with being a Brahman that simply is, but does not feel any love, and rebukes Him for His callousness and cruelty. His love overflows his inner being 2 and his spiritual cry assumes cosmic dimensions and is heard even in the world beyond the sphere of samsāra.3 The thought of oscillating between earth and heaven is deeply distressing, but earthly life with God is preferable to Vaikuntha after life. The Alvar is caught up in the dilemma of devotion. Love yearns for physical communion here and now and longs at the same time for transcendental life. The former is eagerly desired but not desirable on account of its impermanence, and sensuous setting and content; and the latter is desirable but is not actually desired on account of its remoteness in time and space. Mystic love is tossed between the spiritual longing for release and the divine dalliance in the  $l\bar{\imath}l\bar{a}$  of love. At one time, overpowered by the sense of forlornness, the  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}r$  was on the verge of suicide. But he gave up the attempt feeling that the disposal of the self belonged only to the sarīrin and that he had no freedom in the matter. The Lord alone is the source, sustenance and satisfaction of life (dhāraka, bosaka and bhogva).5 He alone satisfies spiritual hunger and thirst, and is the end of all hedonistic desires. The intensity of anuraga or love destroys the distinction and difference between the lover and the beloved, and on one occasion the Alvar imitates, like the Gopis, the ways of Isvara and experiences cosmic consciousness.6 The anguish

<sup>1</sup> kadiyan kodiyan.—Tiru., V. iii. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> āviyinparamalla vetkaiyandō.—Tiru., X. iii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> nīrāi nilanāi.—Tiru., VI. ix.

<sup>4</sup> māyum vagaiyariyen.—Tiru., V. iv. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Tiru., VI. vii. 1.

<sup>6</sup> kadal jñālam s'eidenum yāne yennum.—Tiru., V. vi. 1.

caused by vislesa and the pranks and freaks of the  $l\bar{\imath}l\bar{a}$  of love at last become unbearable and the life of the  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}r$  from this stage till the time of final union is one long period of struggle and suffering which has no precedent in the history of mystic literature in the east or in the west.

The depressions of vislesa vanish with the onset of the ecstasy of the unitive consciousness. While vislesa provides an opportunity to the  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}r$  to think of the perfections of the Lord or His kalyāna guņas and to arouse devotional ardour, samslesa is the soul-sight of His bewitching beauty followed by God-intoxication. The  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}r$  is allured by the Enchanter and thrilled by His touches. The unknown and indistinct is now intuited as the "dark gem". It may not be the integral experience of Brahman in the super-sensuous sphere of Paramapada but it has all the vividness of that experience owing to the perfervid nature of premā bhakti or the devotion of love. The feeling of oneness with the absolute as the Lord of love is known in mystic lore as the orison of union and it is a state of being ravished out of the fleshly feeling. Though the joy of union is ineffable and incommunicable, the outpourings of the Alvar enable the mystic philosopher to evaluate them in the light of the Taittiriya estimate of ananda. The feeling of pleasure is aroused by the contact of the self with the objects of sense and is a trivial and transient state. Happiness is more enduring, as it is the result of an inner cultural discipline. The joy of spiritual communion is different in degree and kind from the pleasures of sensibility and the happiness of cultured life, as it is aroused centrally and not peripherally. The satisfaction of sams lesa is due to the entry of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Karumāņikkam.

transcendental Beauty into one's being and the invasion of its love into every phase of one's life. To the God-intoxicated  $\overline{A}lv\bar{a}r$ , the joy of samslesa overflows the inner springs and inundates the mind and the conative and cognitive sense organs. Rapture is the sudden onrush of joy, and ecstasy is the temporary suspension of the functioning of the sense organs; but in both the cases, the self-feeling is swallowed up in joy. When Beauty rushes to the embrace of the beloved, the beloved expires in the arms of ecstasy.

While the *Upanisad* starts with a calculus of pleasures and concludes that Brahmānanda transcends thought and word 1 and therefore defies definition and description, the God-intoxicated Alvār employs the term "ārāvamudu" to express the nature of Brahman as Bliss insatiable. The joy of communion with Him is never-ending; each assault of love but whets the appetite for more and is only a prelude to the next [punarccikkārāccukavellām], the self emerges from ānanda only to merge in it again. This fits in well with the Upanisadic anubhava according to which Brahman is rasa or bliss itself 2 and the self emerges from ananda, is sustained by ananda and merges into ananda.3 The rapture of communion overflows from the inner springs and inundates the senses, and it is therefore more delightful than all the tastes, smells and sounds which have a sensory origin. The Lord of Love seized with soul-madness enters into the whole being of the Alvar, communicates His joy to it and makes it pulsate with joy. The joy of love's embrace is inescapable and irresistible

Yatō vācō nivartante aprāpya manasā saha.
 rasō vai sah.—Taitt. Up., Anand., vii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Anandāddhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante | ānandena jātāni jīvanti ānandam prayantyabhisam vis'antiti | *Taitt. Up.*, Bhṛghu., vi.

<sup>4</sup> Oruvidam onrinri ennul kalandānukke.—Tiru. II. v. 2.

and the Alvar is immersed in divine deliciousness and the thirst of ages is satisfied. Melting with gratitude, the Alvar offers himself to the beloved and then feels that, since the jīva is the body of the Lord, self-gift to Him has no meaning as He alone is the giver and the gift.1 The Lord is the life of the  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}r$  and the  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}r$  is the life of the Lord and the joy of union is reciprocal on account of the reversibility of relationship. The relish of love increases with enjoyment and is therefore fecundative. Even moksa has no value, if it is not for His satisfaction. Divine madness likethis is infinitely preferable to the mad hankering after worldly and celestial pleasures. In his exalted mood the Alvar loses himself in the love of all living beings and feels in his infinite benevolence that every jīva should attain the state of Brahman and be free from the sorrows of karma. Even the lowliest of the low is adorable if he is touched with divine love. The Lord of the universe seeks His home in the inner self of the Alvar and thus satisfies His soul-hunger. Brahman realises His nature only by enveloping the  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}r$  and devouring his individuality. The joy of unitive experience is in the loss not of personality, but in personality. Sensation, form and self melt into Him, and finite thought expires in infinite bliss. When the body is at last dissolved in death, the freed self soars gloriously through the shining solar path to its eternal home in the absolute. Nature celebrates the occasion by wearing a festive garb, an the very gods hail the cosmic event and the  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}r$ led by the ambassadors of the absolute reaches the world of eternal bliss (X, ix) and becomes free for ever.

Mysticism delights in clothing supra-rational experience in symbolic imagery and sensuous form, and it is only the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Tiruvāimoļi, II. iii. 4.

pure in heart who have subdued the lusts of the flesh and tasted bhakti rasa that can understand the language employed in the grammar of spiritual marriage or ātmavivāha and appreciate the eternal value of Bhagavat kāma. Kāma S'astra is the science of erotics based on conjugal love and it has its own idealistic and mystic charm on account of its being a human expression of the divine love. The mysticism of ātma vivāha has spiritual content and value but is dressed in erotic form owing to the fidelity, fecundity and reciprocity so richly treasured in the Hindu ideal of conjugal love. The most inspiring example of such spiritual marriage in Tamil mystic literature is furnished by the life of Ānḍāl, the daughter of Periālvār, who, filled with Kṛṣṇa premā even in her girlhood, pours out her flaming love in lyric poetry which is unmatched for its thrilling power.

In her Tiruppāvai, justly noted for its poetic beauty and philosophic suggestiveness, Andal gathers together a band of mystics who, like her, were seized with Krsna bremā and became God-intoxicated like the Gopis. They all hurry to the Home of Love in Brndavan to awaken the sleeping Beauty and pray for the fulfilment of their spiritual longing. In another poem known as Nāccivār Tirumozhi consisting of 143 verses, she pours out her burning passion for union with Krsna. When there is no response to the message of love sent by her, she pines away in gloom. Then she invokes the aid of Manmatha, but even the seductions of his shafts have no power over the Ravisher of souls. Her passivity gives way to aggressive love and in the frenzy of fierce love, she assaults the Lord by attempting to pluck out the very roots of love budding from the bosom and aim them at the Torturer so that His heart may be pierced by the wounds of unrequited love.

No true God could long resist the call of such unearthly love and in the mystic consummation that follows, the doors of the sleeping Beauty of S'rīraṅgam are flung open. Soul meets soul and Āṇḍāl rushes into the arms of love and her separate being melts away in the ecstasy of union.

Kṛṣṇa līlā, as enshrined in the Bhāgavata, is the concrete expression par excellence of the divine līlā of love and is the foundation of Vedāntic mysticism. The supernatural and historic Kṛṣṇa depicted in the Mahā Bhārata and the Viṣṇu Purāna as cosmic ruler and redeemer appears in the Bhāgavata as the mystic Kṛṣṇa that shines in every jīva as its uncreated light and sports with it. Metaphysics is transformed into mysticism when the tatva is defined as absolute Beauty with an aprākrta or formless or supersensuous form of its own. The supreme hita is premā or Bhagavat kāma and the attainment of bliss is the purusartha. Beauty feeds love and love has its fruition in bliss. The Sermon on the Mount has its raison de etre in the Song Celestial and the Song Celestial has its meaning and value in the Bhāgavata testament of bliss. The ritualism of the Mīmāmsa, the quietism of the Sānkhya, the realism of Nyāya and monistic idealism have their fulfilment in Kṛṣṇa līlā which is the crown of Vedāntic thought.

The supersensuous beauty of Vaikuntha becomes the cosmic beauty or Bhuvana-sundara with a view to alluring the jīva and ravishing it out of its fleshly feeling. Kṛṣṇa is beauty and bliss. The Holy of holies, Yogīsvaresvara who has no taint of evil, transforms Himself into Manmatha Manmatha, the Conqueror of Eros, by ravishing him out of his erotic attractiveness. Vyāsa, the Vedāntin, and S'uka, the born Brahma-jñānī, were so much drawn by the perfect avatāra of beauty

that they gave up the abstractions of metaphysics and the serenity of mauna or silence and revelled in Kṛṣṇa līlā. It is the rsi who has subdued the lusts of the flesh as ūrdhvaretas or the mystic who has overcome the threefold trsnās that can enter the atmosphere of Brndavana, be entertained by the touches and thrills of Kṛṣṇa premā and madden others with his divine madness. Brahman as Kṛṣṇa is sarva rasa and sarva gandha, and His deliciousness is ever creative and fecundative and knows no satiety.1 The universe is no blot or blank to us, but is ensouled by Beauty which is the food and drink of the mystic. The cosmos is born in Beauty and the whole creative act is the magic of divine love. Mathura is the heart of the universe and when Beauty was born on the human plane without abandoning its infinity, the shining celestials and the ascetic rsis were also born as cowherdesses in that blessed land and nature put on a festive attire to celebrate the cosmic event. The miracles of love enacted in Gökula and Brndavana and ending with the Rāsa Līlā are so entrancing that even metaphysicians and sages through the ages have renounced everything to dwell in the land of the cowherds and worship its dust.

The secret of the full incarnation of Brahman in Bṛndā-vana (avatāra rahasya) is revealed in the scene of Gōpō-love leading to the Rāsa Līlā. The ṛṣis of Daṇḍaka were so much smitten with the entrancing beauty of Rāma that they became love-mad and yearned for tasting Brahmarasa or the bliss of Brahman even on the physical plane. The pūrnāvatāra brings out the māyā of mystic love when the Enchanter descends into human love by establishing Himself in its centre and by the cunning art of spiritual alchemy transfigures

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> tad eva ramyam ruciram navam navam tad eva s'as'van manasō mahōt-savam.— S'rī Bhāgavatam, XII. xii. 49.

the bodily self and brahmanises it. Art reveals itself by concealment and it is the art of Kṛṣṇa māyā that pleasingly smites selfishness, removes otherness and transmutes it into its own likeness. Gopī-love is the highest symbolic expression of the s'arīra-s'arīrin relation that is expounded in the S'ārīraka S'āstra. Just as the body without the soul is like fish out of water, so the Gopī could not live without the love of Krsna pulsating through her soul. The soul-hunger of Krsna was as intense as the God-hunger of the Göpis and when in the game of love they were stripped of ahankara, Kṛṣṇa entered on the scene to reveal Brahma-rasa in the Rāsa-krīdā. All nature was clothed in radiance and was in a mute rapturous mood. It was a beautiful moon-lit night in favoured Brndavana in the budding spring, and the silvery Jumna gently glided with limpid waves. The air was perfumed with the fragrance of flowers. The woods were resonant with the notes of the cuckoo, the humming of the bee and the melodious songs of birds. The grassy lawns were soft like velvet and reflected the shining splendour of the sky. A sublime harmony pervaded and gladdened the whole scene and even the stars in the distant Milky Way twinkled with unutterable love. The voiceless heavens declared the glory and grace of love and gave intimation of their blessed nature. The Beauty of beauties, the Dazzling Dark, entered a lawn on the Jumna bank, flowergarlanded, with a feather on the head, and a flute on His lips and poured forth the sweetest strains of melody. Krsna wore the crown of beauty, touched the heart of love and caused entrancing bliss. Nature felt the thrill of love's song and even stones melted with joy. In the village, the artless Gopis alone heard the call of divine love and were irresistibly drawn by the Enchanter's melody. The Rāsa-krīdā that was then enacted is the highest consummation of mystic consciousness whose spiritual meaning and value even the genius of S'uka, the philosopher-poet, could not fully bring out. The Rāsa dance was a circular rhythm of mystic dance in which the one Beauty without a second became as many Kṛṣṇas as there were Gōbīs and, in the ecstasy that followed, the sense of separateness between the finite and the infinite that kept them at arm's length was dissolved. The Dance of Divine Love as the perfection of rhythmic life is the most delicious rasa of Brahmānanda. Nature responds to the rhythm and tunes itself to the Dance of Divine Love. The atoms dance in matter and suns and stars dance to the tune of gravitation in space. Life dances when it pulsates through the arteries. Ideas trip in the rhythm of logic. Human progress is the procession of rhythmic love, and even in the systematic thinking of the metaphysician, concepts shed their discord owing to the harmony that vibrates through them. In the mystic dance of love, this play reaches perfection. Each jīva is a spark of light, a beam of beauty and a note in Kṛṣṇa's flute. In the symphony of the Rāsa Līlā Krsna is in the centre of love. The centre is everywhere and the circumference nowhere. In the ecstasy of the Rāsa dance, the self-feeling is swept away and reflection expires in rapture. Infinity is held in the arms of love and eternal bliss is experienced in a moment as the eternal present. S'uka, the Vedāntin, is so much entranced by a glimpse of this unitive joy that he prefers the dust on the stage of the Rāsa Līlā to the bliss of mukti and Vaikuntha.

### CHAPTER XIX

## MUKTI

THE study of the nature of the mumuksu leads to that of mukti and the present chapter deals with the Visistādvaitic exposition of the spiritual destiny of the mumuksu and his attainment of Paramapada or the supreme abode of the self. In the sādhana stages, including the mystic quest, the ecstasy of union is only momentary and has no security and stability. It is only by attaining Paramapada that the mumuksu has an integral experience of the absolute (paripūrņa Brahmānubhava) and enjoys eternal bliss. The Paramapada sopāna or the ladder to perfection as described by Vedanta Desika consists of nine stages or steps, of which the first five have already been indicated, viz., viveka, nirveda, virakti, bhīti and Viveka is the clear philosophic thought of brasādana. Brahman as s'arīrin and s'esī. The second, nirveda, is the moral feeling of remorse arising from reflection on the sinfulness of sin and the sorrows of punya-pāpa, and it leads to vairāgya or the renunciation of the hedonistic joys of heaven and of the contentment of kaivalya. Bhīti is not the instinct of fear, but the spiritual dread of the hideousness of samsāra which awakens the religious consciousness and induces the mumuksu to practise bhakti and prapatti in a volitional or responsive way as means to mukti. Mukti is impossible without the grace

of God and of the guru whether as gracia oberans or as gracia cooperans. When bhakti and prapatti develop into a thirst for God. God Himself becomes "the Hound of Heaven", who seeks the self, slays its ahankara or egoism, and swallows up its isolated being. The remaining four stages consisting of utkramana, arcirādi, divya desa prabhāva and prāpti deal with the summum bonum of spiritual endeavour or burusārtha, and portray in a pictorical way the ascent of the anukta or redeemed soul to his home in the absolute. The baramaikāntin or mystic is practically freed from the fetters. of karma including even brārabda karma, as godliness is already guaranteed to him, and mukti may be realised eventually or immediately. In any case, he is a krta-krtya, who has no more problem to solve or evil to subdue. The seed of samsāra stored up in sancita is destroyed, and the vidvān merely awaits release, doing the duties of his asrama. Till then he has only a glimpse of the Immortal Sea that shines beyond. At the time of the dissolution of the body the mukta ascends to Vaikuntha by the straight and shining path of arcirādi and attains sāvujva or intimate union with Brahman.

Mukti is the return from the becoming of samsāra to the being of Brahman, and is thus a reversal of the empirical process due to the complex of avidyā, kāma and karma and the infinite regress of causality. The self that belongs to Brahman somehow confounds itself, has an empirical dress and claims to be a mode of acit, and is thus spatialised by avidyā or ignorance. The confusion of avidyā generates kāma or the desire for sense objects and their transient pleasures. Avidyā creates kāma and kāma creates avidyā and avidyā-kāma binds the empirical self with the chains of samsāra, and

subjects it to the claims and counter-claims of karma and retribution. The free and eternal self is thus confused by avidyā, tempted by kāma and confined by karma and is caught up in the wheel of time. The objective world of space-time is subject to the barinama of endless becoming, and is a cyclic process of being-becoming and pralaya-srsti. But Brahman is the absolute that transcends the psycho-physical contractions of the empirical self and the cosmological changes of prakrti. Brahman is ever free from the complex of avidyakāma-karma. He is alogical, amoral and supra-personal, and is the transcendental Being that is never phenomenalised by space-time and is therefore supra-cosmic. The world of space-time is finite and fractional, and the jīva can attain freedom only when it breaks the fetters of karma and the barriers of space-time. What is true of the cosmos as macrocosm is also true of the mind-body as a microcosm. What is yonder is here and what is here is yonder. The mind-body is made of prakrti and its functions are due to the entry of the cosmic devas into it. While Agni, the god of fire, becomes speech, and Vayu, the wind god, becomes smell, the sun becomes sight and the moon, the mind. One part of man is the earth and the other is heaven, and mukti is liberation from worldly and other-worldly limitations and entry into the infinite. Mukti thus implies self-transcendence in the subjective aspect of mastery over karma and in the objective aspect of going beyond the limits of space-time. The mind-body of the empirical self is composed of the twenty-four tatvas or principles of prakrti including psychic, material and cosmic stuff and freedom from embodiment connotes the withdrawal of the jīva from the psycho-physical sphere of avidyā-kāmakarma and the cosmic sphere of space-time. While the idea of divine immanence inspires the hope of spiritual union and

immortal life, that of transcendence assures the security of salvation in *Paramapada*. Brahman creates the world of space-time as a suitable environment for moulding the jīva and shaping it into its own image by brahmanising it, and this consummation is attained in the sphere of eternity. Brahman is partially revealed in the transient world of līlā and fully realised only in the eternal world yonder which is referred to as tripādōsya amṛtam divi in the "Puruṣa S'ūkta".

The Advaitic idea of mukti presents difficulties arising from the dualism between Brahman and avidvā. Avidvā is either existent or non-existent or both. If it is non-existent like the square-circle as held by the Ajātavādins, there is no meaning in seeking mukti or negating bare negation. If it exists as a bhāva badārtha as held by the phenomenalists, it must have some reality, and what is real cannot be sublated or destroyed. If it is both, as an obscuring indefinable something as held by the illusionists, it confessedly cannot be logically defined as an object of practical enquiry. Mukti is the destruction of avidyā and the consequent release from embodiment. Hence the idea of jivanmukti or freedom in embodiment, which involves the continuance of the body even after release, is a manifest self-contradiction. It is sought to be explained by the Advaitin by the analogies of the whirling of the potter's wheel even after the potter has stopped turning it, of the perception of the double moon even after disillusionment and of the velocity of the flying arrow after it is discharged. But the points of resemblance are not essential. The first simile is not adequate because the idea of causality has strictly no place in Advaita. As regards the second simile, there is an illicit use of the causal category. The cause of the illusion is not an illusion, and if there is disillusionment, then the illusion as sublated by jñāna should vanish, and can never continue to be an effect. To say that illusion remains and illusoriness vanishes is ingenious, but not convincing; it explains away the problem instead of explaining it. The third simile also employs the causal category, but really it explains away the whole problem. Jñāna and ajñāna can never coexist. If ajñāna is sublated, it is destroyed for ever, and there cannot be any degrees in such sublation. The explanation offered by the Ekajīvavādins and the Nānājīvavādins is equally unsatisfactory. The former deny the many-soul theory and affirm that the soul is only one and that release is entire and instantaneous, as it is the dissolution of nescience. But its chief defect lies in denying the reality of social life and its solidarity and it is a case of super-solipsism. The doctrine of nānājīva, which admits of a plurality of jīvas. also admits of plurality of mukti and there would thus be as many jīvanmuktas as there are individual avidyās. To overcome this difficulty, the Advaitin states that in jīvanmukti the invannukta becomes Isvara and mukti thus connotes not dis-illusionment or disillusion, but the state of Isvaratva. But even the omniscience of Isvara is only nescience on a cosmic scale, and till he attains freedom eventually in sarvamukti he is not free from māyōpādhi or the limitations of māyā. To escape this charge, the Advaitin defines mukti as disillusionment like light removing darkness at once. He denies the validity of two muktis, jīvanmukti and videhamukti. Enlightenment is the cessation of ajñāna and has no relation to the dissolution of the body. On the onset of Brahmajñāna, bhramā is sublated or dispelled, and it is immaterial whether there is body or no body. But this theory of sublation is itself riddled with discrepancies and has no conclusiveness. Sublation is a relation between the sublater and the sublated

and involves a locus or āsrava. Jñāna cannot stultify ajñāna and stultify itself. The latter is sublated by the former; but the former cannot destroy itself. Iñāna is itself the effect of ajñāna, and avarana sakti or obscuring power persists even after the viksepa or appearance ceases to be. To say that inana destroys ajñāna and destroys itself like poison dispelling poison and the clearing-nut precipitating itself is not convincing as, in both the analogies, the cause persists in the effect. In the case of the three kinds of reality, prātibhāsika, vvāvahārika and pāramārthika, there are kinds and degrees of sublation, and the higher stultifies the lower and the highest, Brahmajñāna, cannot stultify itself. Sublation is a state of self-transcendence and not a process of negating negation. Thus all the theories of mukti like disillusionment, sublation and the dissolution of the false outlook have no finality, and carry no conviction. In true mukti, the eternal transcends the temporal, and it is only in the world of Brahman transcending the phenomenal world that the jīva is transformed or brahmanised and enjoys eternal life. The mukta belongs to the realm of Brahman, but as long as he continues in karma loka, he is subject to the ills of avidvā-kāma-karma. Emancipation results only when the bound self abandons the realm of karma and attains Brahman

At the time of the dissolution of the physical body, which may happen at any time and in any manner, the released self withdraws from the gross state to the subtle state and ascends to the absolute by the straight and shining path of arcirādi. Dissolution is not the destruction of the psychic make-up, but a process of withdrawal and involution, and death to the vidvān is the re-entry of the self into the realm of the infinite,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B., IV. ii. 19 and 20 and 1 to 13.

which is the headquarters of reality. The indrivas enter into manas and manas into prāna and prāna is absorbed in the jīva, and the self, with its homing instinct, sheds the body for ever and retires from functioning in the world of sense and understanding and returns to its centre, which is the heart of Brahmapuri. Brahman's entry into matter with the self and making the body its living temple are solely with a view to transfiguring it. Death is the last scene of this divine comedy. Before entry into the Brahmarandhra, there is the parting of the ways known as arcirādi or the path of the Gods and dhūmayāna or the path of smoke. The bound jīva that has not intuited Brahman follows the dark and dreary way and descends into the wilderness of samsāra after a temporary enjoyment of the pleasures of bitr loka or the world of the manes and of Svarga; but the vidvān who has esoteric knowledge of Brahman ascends the shining path or arcirādi gati'. The Brahmarandhra is the gateway to God and is illumined by the ivotis of the Harda, the indwelling self; the enlightened mukta then finds the Brahmanādi2 and soars gloriously to the world of eternal beauty by the radiant path of the gods. The making of a single mukta is a cosmic event and the devas hail the entry of the finite self into infinity and sing hallelujahs in their own celestial way. The cosmic gods like Agni, Vāyu, Varuņa, Indra and Brahmā greet the vidvān as a rare spiritual victor who has regained his spirituality by subduing worldliness. They are not sign-posts (mārgachinna), nor spheres of enjoyment (bhōgasthāna), but are spiritual powers with specific functions, of which the most important is the glorifying of the radiant self in its triumphant progress to its pre-established eternal home. The spiritual ascent is

<sup>1</sup> Kath, Up., II. vi. 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. B., IV. ii. 16. <sup>3</sup> S. B., IV. iii. 4.

facilitated by the help of the trans-human person known as amānava puruṣa who is really the ambassador of the absolute.¹ The mukta soars on the two wings of freedom and wisdom higher and higher, and goes beyond the cosmic sphere of space-time consisting of the seven spheres or circles (āvaraṇa saptaka) of aṇḍa (the mundane world), jala (the world of water), agni (the world of fire), ākāsa (the world of ether), ahankāra (egoism), mahat (intellect) and pradhāna (matter), sheds the garments of nature, reaches the sphere of Brahman and enjoys its bliss for ever.

The Sūtrakāra here raises the eschatological question whether this arcirādi gati involving ascent and attainment applies to the meditators on the Supreme Brahman or those on the effected or kārya Brahman called Hiranyagarbha. and takes as his text the Chandogya Upanisad passage (V. x. 2) which promises the godward way leading to Brahma (sa enān Brahma<sup>2</sup> gamayati) to one who practises the Pañcāgnividyā or meditation on the five-fold fire. In discussing this topic in IV. iii. 6, he considers the prima facie view of Bādari that the gati applies only to meditators on the kārva Brahman and its refutation by Jaimini before he states his own view or siddhanta. But the Advaitin turns the tables by accepting, on his own a priori principles of reasoning, the view of Bādari as the first and final view. The distinction between saguna Brahman and nirguna Brahman serves his purpose and saguna Brahman is here equated by him with Hiranyagarbha, the first born of the absolute. The monistic philosopher regards the ideals of gati (ascent) and gantavya

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ch. Up., V. x. 2.

 $<sup>^2</sup>$  The word "Brahma" is used here in the neuter and so signifies Parabrahman. The same word in the masculine form Brahmāṇam would apply to Brahma the four-faced, the effected or  $k\bar{a}rya$  Brahman.

(attainment) as the categories of phenomenal reality, which have no adequacy in the identity philosophy of nirguna Brahman. Mukti is the awakening of pure consciousness which is eternally self-realised and not the accomplishment of a far off divine event. The notion of a Brahmaloka or paradise in which the released self basks and feasts in eternal sunshine, drinks nectar without satiety and divinely obtains all worlds and all desires, is refuted and rejected by the monistic philosopher as a mere anthropomorphic and hedonistic view suited only to the empirically-minded. The distinctions of here and yonder, now and hereafter are spatial and temporal ideas and they cannot apply to mukti, which is the immediate intuition of the absolute here-now and not something to be attained or super-added. In mukti, there is no going or goal, as Brahman is the same as iñana or mukti. The absolute. being changeless and timeless, can never move and "has no seasons." Progress is in reality, though it is not of reality, and it has a meaning only in the moral and religious realms. The Advaitic theory of two Brahmans claims to satisfy both the philosopher, that knows the self-identical absolute, and the empirically-minded theist that worships a personal God and seeks His kingdom. With this a priori idea, the Advaitin defends Bādari and assigns only a secondary value to the siddhānta of Bādarāyaņa by straining the texts. argues thus: Firstly, the neuter word 'Brahma' in the context signifies or suggests the kārya Brahman owing to the proximity of the latter to Parabrahman as its first born. Secondly, the promise of final mukti to the seeker after kārva Brahman is not self-discrepant, as he attains it eventually along with Brahmā himself in krama mukti, though not immediately. Thirdly, the reference in the corresponding

<sup>1</sup> Vide, Sv. Up., VI. xviii.

passage of the Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad (VIII. ii. 15) to the muktas being led to the worlds of Brahman can apply only to the pluralistic universe of conditioned Brahman and not to the absolute.

Following the interpretation of the Sūtrakāra, Rāmānuja combats the view of Bādari and establishes the truth that arcirādi gati is the direct way to mukti, by appeal to reason and revelation. Mukti is not only the direct apprehension of Brahman, but a spiritual pilgrimage to, or the progressive attainment of, Brahmaloka. The Advaitic exposition of the doctrine of two muktis,-krama mukti for those who meditate on the saguna Brahman reduced to the level of Hiranyagarbha, the kārya Brahman, and of jīvanmukti for those who directly apprehend the absolute or nirguna Brahman,—is untenable. Pure Advaita as identity philosophy does not admit of the dual standpoint of two vidyās, two Brahmans and two muktis. The very distinction between the mumuksu who seeks jñāna and the mukta who realises it, betrays the self-contradiction between becoming and being. On the strict Advaitic view or ajātavāda, Brahman is and māyā is not and the problem of two paths, two view-points and even stages of sublation is illegitimate and non-existent like the squarecircle. But practical Advaita, as the theory of compromises which concedes the reality of the spatialised Brahman to suit the needs of theism, is caught up in the confusions of thought and the dogmatism of theology. The theory of an unreal self seeking freedom from unreal bondage and attaining an unreal world is itself false and illusory. Mukti is a region where reason cannot penetrate and the illumined faith in the Upanisad which has specialised in it is the only logical attitude, and not agnosticism. If the Upanisad is a real text and test of truth, it could not speak with a double voice and could not be aware of the antagonism between the metaphysical highest or nirguṇa Brahman and the theological highest or kārya Brahman. To seek the support of the Upaniṣad in favour of this distinction is a case of straining the text to suit the needs of esoteric metaphysics.

The three arguments are countered by the following reasons. Firstly, to say that Brahman refers to Brahma on account of the proximity of the latter to Brahman, and to make saguna Brahman a finite God are to do violence to philosophic thinking and religious exposition. In the second place, there is no collision between historic progress and philosophic insight, as the eternal alone gives a meaning to the temporal. It is only the moral and spiritual self fettered by karma that progresses with its subtle s'arīra towards perfection and not the absolute which is pure and perfect. If saguna Brahman is a glorified samsārin needing mukti for himself, no mumuksu will adore a finite God who is a brahman suffering from imperfection. The Advaitin first accepts saguna Brahman as satisfying the Sūtrakāra's definition in the second Sūtra that Brahman is the first cause and finally relegates the same saguna Brahman to the status of the effected Brahmā or the first-born of Brahman. As regards the so-called pluralistic view contained in the expression 'worlds of Brahman', it should be noted that the words 'worlds' and 'Brahman' are appositional involving no opposition, and connote Brahman. In mukti, the pluralistic consciousness of the world alone is abolished and not the pluralistic world itself, and it is entirely different from 'the paradise of the popular imagination' both in degree and in kind; Visistādvaita

alone satisfies the philosophic quest for unity and the mystic hunger for union.

The crux of the whole problem lies in the interpretation of the Sūtra (IV. ii. 12) about the destiny of the released self as expounded in the Brhadāranyakōpanisad (VI. iv. 6): "Of him who is without desire (akāmayamāna) his vital breaths or prānas do not depart." The contention of the Advaitin that it refers to the immediate destruction of the linga sarīra or subtle body resulting from avidyā is examined at some length in Chapter VIII of my "Philosophy of Bhedābheda." It is there shown that the Upanisadic meaning is that the prānas in the linga sarīra follow the vidvān till he transcends the world of samsāra. If the theory of the fictitious self (caitanya ābhāsa), which is only an illusory appearance of consciousness attaining the world of *Īsvara*, the first born of the cosmic figment, is seriously maintained by speculative Advaita, mukti becomes a make-believe, and the whole theory is open to the charge of acosmic illusionism. The Visistādvaitin claims insight into Vedāntic tradition and seeks the saving grace of Brahman as "möksaþrasāda," a term for which, according to Deussen, there is no corresponding term in the esoteric system of monism. The Upanisad repeatedly declares the attainment of Brahman as the goal and glory of spiritual endeavour. The Chāndōgya (IV. xv. 6), the Mundaka (I. ii. 11), the Brhadāranyaka (VIII. ii. 15) and the Prasna Upanișads (I. 10) guarantee eternal life (apunarāvrtti) to the vidvān who seeks the luminous path and avoids the way of darkness. The Katha Upanisad (II. vi. 16) and the Aitareva Upanisad (VI. v. 1) likewise glorify the way to immortality and the Gītā also (VIII. 26) extols the devayāna path leading to eternity. The Sūtras begin with the metaphysical definition

of Brahman as the immanent ground of existence and end with the religious idea of Brahman as the goal of spiritual experience and the home of all eternal values, and promise *mukti* and eternal life to the seeker after Brahman as the God of religion.

The ascent to the absolute is further described in the "Paramapada Sopana", following the "Vaikuntha Gadya" and the Kausītaki Upanisad as the entry into the home of the absolute or divyades a prāpti. The soaring self led by the ambassador of eternity at last enters the waters of immortality or Virajā which mark the boundary line or the transition between the transcendental sphere of Brahman and the empirical sphere of karma. By spiritually plunging into the Ocean Pacific, as the mystic calls it, the released self is purified and perfected and goes to the other shore like the stranded islander crossing the sea, and enters his own home in the country of the Soul, where there is light without night or nescience. When Brahman is intuited, the fetters of the heart are broken. all doubts are solved and all karma is destroyed. As the flowing rivers disappear in the sea losing their name and form, a wise man freed from name and form goes to the Shining Self and the mortal becomes immortal.2 The Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad, while expounding the Paryanka Vidyā (Chap. I. 2 to 5) portrays in the language of sensesymbolism and artistic imagery, the ineffable ecstasy of attaining Brahmalōka or Vaikuntha which is alogical, amoral and supra-personal. The Upanisad frequently refers to the transcendental nature of experience, when it insists on the initiation into Brahmajñāna of those who are specialists

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mund. Up., II. ii. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., III. ii. 8.

in spirituality. Brahman as ultimate reality is realisable only by the vidvān who is pure in heart, and it is by Brahmaprayatna that he can attain Brahmajñāna and eventually Brahmānanda in Brahmalōka. Immersed in the Ocean Pacific, the mukta is freed from the contractions of karma in its dual aspect of punya-pāpa and the pairs of opposites and at the entrance to the infinite he is transfigured and brahmanised. The process of transfiguration is explained metaphorically as Brahmālankāra, Brahmagandha and Brahmarasa. In the world of karma, the senses turn outward, but the vidvān who desires immortality has Brahmadrsti or a vision of Brahman. The form, flavour and fragrance of Brahmānubhava are not physical or psychical, but are aprākrta or super-sensuous. In the world of Brahman or Paramapada, matter shines without mutation and time exists under the form of eternity. The eternals are not visesanas or adjectives housed in the absolute as its elements, but are its members revelling in the rapture of union. "The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor the stars; by His light everything is lighted". "Brahman is before and behind, above and below." The freed soul gloriously enters into S'rī Vaikuntha which is the heart of Brahmaloka and its headquarters, reaches the hall of anandamaya or bliss and has a direct soul-sight of the Paramjyōtis or Supreme Light with a shining form more luminous than a million suns on the paryanka or couch, of which till then he had only fragmentary, inferential and s'āstraic knowledge. Brahman as infinite Beauty is enthroned on a paryanka which no mortal eye has seen and which is supported by dharma, jñāna, vairāgya and aisvarya. That throne is prajñā or wisdom and Brahman is satyam or the true of the true. The released self realises the unitive consciousness. The infinite of space-time, which staggers the

scientific imagination, pales into infinitesimal littleness in the light of the infinite and the eternal glory of Vaikuntha, which transcends the limits of thought. The Brahmavit enjoys all the perfections of Vaikuntha like  $s\bar{a}l\bar{o}kya$  or identity of abode,  $s\bar{a}m\bar{v}pya$  or proximity,  $s\bar{a}r\bar{u}pya$  or similarity of form and  $s\bar{a}yujya$  or intimate union; and is ever immersed in the eternal bliss of Brahman.  $S\bar{a}l\bar{o}kya$  or co-existence leads to fellowship  $(s\bar{a}m\bar{v}pya)$  and transformation and deification  $(s\bar{a}r\bar{u}pya)$ , and is consummated in the bliss of communion or  $s\bar{a}yujya$ .

The nature of mukti as the attainment of the blessedness of Paramabada cannot be described or defined, and even the Upanisad with its genius for Brahman recognises the utter inadequacy of finite categories to grasp the meaning of that transcendental state. Brahmaloka is the nameless beyond, which cannot be proved by logical thinking or apprehended by sāstraic or scriptural knowledge. The absolute of ontology is beyond space and time or prakrti and kāla, and is therefore niravayava or formless, nirguna or indeterminate, kālātīta or eternal. As Paramātman, Brahman is the supersubject and is supra-personal and transcends the limits of materialism and spiritualism. Ethical religion is equally helpless in knowing the redemptive will of Isvara as the Creator of creators and overcoming the dilemma of free will and determinism. From the religious point of view, He reveals Himself unto him whom He chooses as He is Himself the ubāya and the upeya; and it is difficult to decide between voluntarism and predestination. On the whole the Visistādvaitic idea of mukti transcends the theorising activity of thought, and cannot be labelled as a form of theism, nondualism or any other known form of 'ism'.

This negative logic saves its philosophy from the charge of dogmatism, but it may lead to the perils of agnosticism. The Upanisad therefore attempts to describe the inexpressible experience by positive predicates, by insisting on the fact of intuitive perception of Brahman by the purified and perfected consciousness or jñāna. The Brahmavit can apprehend Brahman with the divine eye, comprehend His nature and have an integral experience of the absolute (paripūrna Brahmānubhava). He is led from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light and from death to immortality and though this experience is alogical and amoral, the Upanisad tries to make it intelligible to the empirical consciousness in terms of cognition, conation and feeling. Brahman is the All-Self and by the expansive consciousness of dharmabhūtajñāna, the nityasūri realises the unitive state. Rsi Vāmadeva saw Brahman in all beings and all beings in Brahman and, on the onset of cosmic consciousness, he sang "I am Manu, I am the sun, I am all things." The mukta overcomes the moral distinction of punya-pāpa and realises all his desires in Paramapada. His self-feeling melts away at the sight of the bewitching beauty of Brahman and his Vedāntic thought expires in the ecstasy of mystic union.

Yama, the God of Death, teaches Naciketas the nature of deathless life or *mukti*, and in expounding his teaching, Rāmānuja following the *Sūtrakāra* develops his philosophy by refuting rival theories.<sup>2</sup> These may be arranged in an ascending order according to their *Vedāntic* value. The Buddhist, as *Kṣaṇikavijñānavādin*, regards the *jīva* as a series of momentary mental states appearing as a persisting

<sup>1</sup> Brhad. Up., III. iii. 28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S.B., I. ii. 12,

entity and explains mukti as the cessation of the psychophysical process. In nirvana, the self perishes, the five skandas are abolished and pain passes away and there is stirless repose. But a mere mental state cannot seek mukti and the fatal negative logic of nirvana leads to the abyss of sūnya or void. The Jaina posits the existence of the jīva and explains mukti as the severance of the atman from the soilure of karma and the entry of the self into endless perfection. But if mukti is an ascent and not an attainment, such an endless pursuit is without ethical meaning and spiritual value. The ethical concept of progress can have its meaning only in the religious realisation of Brahman. In the Sānkhyan scheme, bondage is the conjunction of purusa and prakrti and mukti is their disjunction. Kaivalya is the flight of the alone to the alone. It is more a negative state of riddance from evil than the realisation of positive bliss. The freed self is a passive spectator that knows nothing and does nothing. The Vaisesika affirms the existence of Isvara; but his view of mukti is also negative, as it means only the cessation of pain and the abolition of the cognitional activity of the jiva. The Vaisesika feels that thinking leads to doubt and distress, and is therefore inclined to do away with the whole process. But the state of the abolished consciousness is like the stillness of the statue and the peace of death. Consciousness without an object is equivalent to unconsciousness. The Vedāntic view of mukti has the merit of recognising the eternal value of Brahmajñāna though Vedāntins differ in their exposition. Bhāskara, the Bhedābhedavādin, defines mukti as the attainment of ekībhāva or oneness with the absolute in which the jīva sheds its conditionateness or ubādhis and becomes the unconditioned Brahman. The other Bhedābhedavādins correct the monistic

tendency of Bhāskara and explain mukti as the realisation of the identity of the  $j\bar{\imath}va$  with Brahman as well as its difference. To them mukti is not the abolition of the self but its fulfilment as an element or member of the absolute. As the  $S'\bar{a}kt$  says, Brahman is both the seamless or pure consciousness and the sundered whole. The  $Dvaitav\bar{a}da$  of  $\bar{A}$ nandat $\bar{\imath}$ rtha rejects all the monistic views of mukti, but its contention that there are differences in the qualitative experiences of the bliss of Brahman is not acceptable to the  $Visist\bar{a}dvaitin$ .

The Advaitic view of mukti in its different forms demands more attention on account of its philosophic interest and the respect it commands in modern Indian thought. Mukti is defined by the Advaitins as the negation of nescience or bhramā that is somehow in Brahman and is variously interpreted as self-transcendence, disillusionment or self-identity of the absolute. If avidyā means the principle of relativity or duality, mukti is the dissolution of the dualistic outlook, and it is not very different from Bhāskara's ekībhāva. If avidvā is the upādhi as an illusion and not as a phenomenal appearance. mukti means disillusionment. By denying the false, the true remains identical with itself. This view, however, has to meet the charge of leading to acosmism and subjectivism. Mukti is negatively stated as the removal of ajñāna through iñāna. If avidyā is non-existent, like the square-circle, and Brahmajñāna is jñāna that is Brahman and not jñāna of Brahman, Brahman is ever-existent, and the question of mukti would not arise at all. The theistic criticism of Advaita as Buddhism in disguise is met by its modern expounders by the counter-argument that Buddhism itself is Advaita in a negative aspect. The Advaitic view of nirvana as Brahmajñāna is said to complete and justify the negative way of Buddhist dialectics, as it regards the absolute as sūnya or non-existent from the empirical standpoint and as the fulness of being in the transcendental state. Buddhism is said to be valuable to the Advaitic dialecticians when it lays bare the self-contradictions of the Isvara concept and thus marks a transition to aikyavāda. The absolutist as a mere Māyāvādin makes common cause with Nāgārjuna and Bradley, and pulls down Isvara from His Isvaratva by defining Him as the absolute phenomenalised, being-becoming and the finite-infinite caught up in the self-contradiction of māyā, subordinating Him even to the jīvanmukta and finally destroying Him by the devastating dialectic of drstisrsti-vāda and ekajīvavāda. S'ankara's distinction of two Brahmans and two muktis tends to compromise the absolute of monism by mobilising the immobile nirguna Brahman and giving Him an empiric dress to suit the needs of the avidvā-ridden theist, though this attempt at fusion seems to end in confusion. The Nagarjuna or Humian mentality is obvious in the following compliment paid by an eminent Advaitin to Visistādvaita: "Rāmānuja's beautiful stories of the other world, which he narrates with the confidence of one who had personally assisted at the origination of the world, carries no conviction." The criticism of illusionism by the same thinker is, however, in the theistic line. "The false imitators of the Upanisadic ideal with an extreme of arrogant audacity declare that Brahman is absolutely homogeneous impersonal intelligence." If the Advaitin gives up his intellectualism and its resulting agnosticism and follows his religious instinct, nirguna Brahman would become practically the same as the Brahman of Visistadvaita and mukti would then be gained by the saving grace of God. Nirguna Brahman would not be the truth of saguna Brahman

as reality behind appearance but would be saguna Brahman itself. Mukti would then mean not the abolition of plurality, but only the removal of the sense of plurality or of a false outlook.

Rāmānuja understands by mukti the integral experience of Brahman that has infinite jñāna and ānanda and other per-This is also the true nature of the jīva realised by fections. the destruction of avidyā-karma. The jīva is a prakāra or sarīra of Brahman and its jñāna which is infinite, has, as its essential nature, the intuitive experience of the bliss of Brahman. The Chāndōgya text (VIII. iii. 4) explains mukti as the self-realisation of the atman by self-transcendence "Param jyōtir upasampadya svena rūpeņa abhinispadyate" and the Sūtras bring out its full implication. The serene self attains the being of its being when it has a soul-sight of the boundless light of Brahman, and thus attains its essential and eternal nature. Self-realisation is not the attainment or emergence of something new, but is the self-manifestation due to the cessation of avidyā-karma and the samsāric process resulting therefrom. In mukti the atman is free from sin, old age, death, grief, hunger and thirst, and his desires are at once realised. Karma conditions jñāna and contracts it and creates the bodily self which is subject to contingency, change and sorrow; but in mukti the mortal becomes immortal and the self regains its eternity. Consciousness in the empirical states of waking, dream and sleep is obscured by avidyā and is cribbed and cabined; but, in the expansive state of the unitive life, it realises its infinity. Though the ātman is avikāra or changeless and nitya or eternal, the limitations and obscurations of its attributive intelligence affect its integrity indirectly, and it is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., IV. iv. 1.

only in the state of self-realisedness that the self shines in its own effulgence like the cloudless sun. The ātman itself is a ray of the Paramjyōtis or supreme light and its luminosity is the revelation of the boundless light, which is the source of the light of suns and stars and the serene self. Self-realisation is thus the intuitive knowledge of the ātman and its self, and is not bare identity. If, as the Advaitin says, jñāna consists in the abolition of the vṛttis of the self or psychoses, nothingness alone would remain, and mukti would cease to have any meaning. The self cannot suck in its own selfhood without committing suicide.

Brahmajñāna is the intuition of Brahman as the Supreme Self. and, though it is alogical, the Sūtras, in the concluding section, seek to make it intelligible to us by using metaphors and analogies in the language of cognition, conation and feeling. Before defining the content of mukti, the fascinating problem of the destiny of the soul is discussed. Is mukti the experience of absolute distinction and difference between the mukta and Brahman or of their identity or inseparability? The Upanisads express divergent views, which seem to defy the Sūtra method of samanvaya and synthesis. The bheda texts like those of the Katha Upanisad (I. iii. 1) dwell on the distinction between the two and the absolute dependence of the iva on Isvara. The Taittiriya Upanisad (Anand. i) and the Mundaka Upanisad (III. i. 3) dwell on fellowship and equality of attributes when the seer intuits the shining self and attains all desires along with Brahman. The Chāndōgya text in VI. xiii and the Mundaka text in III. ii. 8 intimate the truth of absorption by the analogy of the dissolution of salt in water and the merging of the river in the sea. The western absolutist uses the terms absorption, mergence,

coalescence, dissolution, dissipation and identity in a loose sense without defining their exact meaning and value. The monistic texts favour identity when they affirm that the self is Brahman. The philosophical theist insists on the external but eternal relation between the finite and the infinite and defines Brahman as the personal God entering into personal relations with the jīva with a view to redeeming it from its career of sin, and states that, in Brahmaloka, the mukta has the freedom to serve Isvara in his own unique way. He also affirms the fellowship and equality of the self with God as the son of God participating in the joy of the Father. Bhāskara defines mukti as ekībhāva or oneness with the absolute in which the self is dissolved in the infinite both in existence and in content. The idea of Dvaitādvaita or pluralistic monism as a form of bhedābheda preserves separateness as well as unity. The monist insists on identity or aikya as opposed to separateness (bheda), similarity (parama sāmya or sāmarasya), absorption (ekībhāva) and the ideas of bhedābheda.

The Sūtrakāra reconciles all the texts and their truths by the all-comprehensive concept of avibhāga.¹ The ātman has Brahman as its inner self and prakārin and the non-dualistic consciousness of the mukta is revealed in the experience, "I am Brahman without any division or vibhāga." This does not mean svarūpa aikya or absolute identity but visiṣṭa aikya in which the self is realised as the apṛthaksid-dhaviseṣaṇa or inseparable mode and not as an adjective housed in the absolute. The jīva abides for ever as an entity and is different from Brahman, but though there is difference in denotation, there is identity in connotation, as every concept connoting the prakāra also connotes the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.B., IV. iv. 4.

brakārin. This avinābhāva or inseparability abolishes the sense of exclusiveness and externality that belongs to the bodily self of aharikāra or egoism, but it does not annul the aham or ego consciousness of the ātman. Rapt in love, the mukta is ever drawn by the beauty of Brahman and enjoys its bliss. Equality is attained when the brahmanised mukta sheds his body, shakes off bunya-baba and acquires the purity of Brahman. Such transmutation does not mean that every discord and evil is harmonised in the absolute and contributes to its wholeness. The sense of dependence is revealed by the truth that the sarīra depends for its life on the sarīrin and serves as an instrument of His will. Avibhaga or non-division thus connotes existential difference between Brahman and the mukta and experienced unity due to the joy of sāyujya or intimate communion, and it is not the same as the loss of personality. In the mystic sense, the self-feeling is swallowed up in the supra-personal experience of avibhaga or the unitive experience of the bliss of Brahman. This brings out the nature of Brahmarasa more than co-existence (sālōkya), similarity (sārūþya) and intimacy (sāmīþya). As the Visnu Purāna 1 says, the mukta attains ātmabhāva like magnetised iron and is not identical with Brahman. The author of the Dramida Bhāṣya also says that owing to his equality (sāyujya) with the divinity, the mukta effects all things like Him. The Gītā defines mukti as the attainment of equality of attributes with Brahman.2

Identity philosophy (aikyavāda) is extolled by Deussen as the fundamental truth of philosophy and religion, which the *Upaniṣadic* thinkers discovered for the first time to their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Viṣṇu Purāṇa, VI. vii. 30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> B, G., XIV. 2.

immortal honour. The same solution was, according to him, found later, ont wo occasions, by Parmenides and Plato in whom Greek thought reached its climax, and still later by Kant and Schopenhauer. According to this view, Brahman is the sole reality and the world is only an appearance or māyā which is to be rejected. The equational view is later explained by Deussen in terms of unio-mystico or mystic union. In the metaphysical domain there is no becoming. What is two can never become one and what is one is one already. The state of mukti is further elucidated by the term indivisibility in the light of the simile of the rivers losing their names when they flow into the sea. Mukti is also defined by him as a state of the transformation of the natural man. He says that the Upanisad and the New Testament state the same truth though the former demands a change of the understanding and the latter, of the will. The terms equation, union and indivisibility used by Deussen are neither synonymous nor clear. Identity is not the same as equation and both are different from the term indivisibility. The meaning conveyed by the term transformation as also the term inseparability fits in with Visistadvaita and has no relation to the theory of pure consciousness. Deussen's exposition is rejected by other modern Advaitins who make a distinction between the illusion theory and the phenomenon view, and criticise the former as a false imitation or misunderstanding of the Upanisadic ideal. The finite according to them is rooted in the infinite and even in mukti there is the abolition not of plurality but only of the sense of plurality. The illusoriness of the world disappears and no longer deceives the mukta, though the illusion may remain. Non-difference denies difference but does not affirm identity. Advaitic experience thus interpreted has much in common with Bhāskara's idea of mukti as ekībhāva or the unitive

experience of the mystic. If the logic of mysticism is followed, the only conclusion is the Sūtra idea of avibhāga as interpreted by Rāmānuja. Advaita has either to accept the ajātavāda of Gauḍapāda and its Buddhistic leanings or to make common cause with the view of Visiṣṭādvaita. The latter is an integral experience of Brahman which satisfies all the demands of spiritual life, and the canons of consistent thinking.

The next question is the enquiry into the nature of the manifestation of intelligence in mukti. While Jaimini thinks that the freed self is brahmanised and has the eight-fold perfections of Brahman, Audulomi favours the monistic view that moksa is the realisation of the pure consciousness of Brahman (vijñāna-ghana) devoid of the subject-object relation. The Advaitin distinguishes between the intuition of the indeterminate and the logical thought of the concrete universal. He concludes that Brahma jñāna is consciousness transcending the self-contradictions of the subject-object relation and that Jaimini is at the logical level of Isvara and that Audulomi has the intuition of the absolute. But consciousness, as the name itself suggests, implies an experiencing subject conscious of an object and is therefore determinate. Absolute consciousness without any content is in no way different from absolute unconsciousness like that of a stone or the sleep state. Consistent monism affirming absolute consciousness or cinmātra cannot maintain the theory of the All-Self or universal consciousness, as the sat without a second is neither a self nor All-Self, and the universe and its manifoldness vanish in the absolute. If Isvara is moulded by thought and spatialised by the upādhis, and if omniscience is nescience on a cosmic scale, philosophy itself would be

infected by avidyā and religion would become a mere appearance. The only way of avoiding subjectivism and nihilism is to retrace the steps and accept the integrity of the one Brahman without dissecting it into two and to consider it as saguna as all the other Vedantic philosophers do. In mukti, the brahmanised self acquires Brahma jñāna and intuits Brahman in all beings and all beings in Brahman "under the form of eternity". Intuition is the alogical which is the fulfilment of the logical. The monism of Audulomi is acceptable to Badarāyaņa if it brings out the self-manifestation of intelligence without doing violence to the theistic exposition of Jaimini. The principle of sublation is inadmissible where there is equal Upanisadic authority for both the sides, and there is really no self-contradiction in the varieties of Upanisadic experience. Self-illumination in the state of mukti brings out the infinite intelligence and omniscience of the finite or monadic self, when it is freed from the limitations of karma. Its visista aikya is then apprehended in non-difference from Brahman. The Vedāntic seer intuits Brahman as his very self when he says: "I am Thou, Holy Divinity, and Thou art myself." "What He is, that am I." Prahlāda, like Vāmadeva, in his ecstasy, thus describes the onset of cosmic consciousness and All-Selfness: "As the infinite is all-pervading, He is myself, all things proceed from me, I am all things, all things are in me who am eternal." The ātman is non-different from the Supreme Self by attaining the being of its being. Nammalvar also affirms the truth of this cosmic experience when he, in the excess of his love, imitates and mirrors forth the glory of God and claims in his Tiruvāimoļi (V. vi) the two vibhūtis of the cosmic and ultra-cosmic functions as his own. He feels he owns the infinite when he has

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Viṣṇu Purāṇa, I. xix. 85.

a soul-sight of 'that divine thread which holds the whole congeries of things'. Thus the *mukta* with his freed consciousness views himself and the cosmos with the eye of Brahman (*Brahma cakṣus*) when he experiences his *aham* as the *pra-kāra* or mode of Brahman and when his *jñāna* mirrors forth the whole universe and he realises his oneness with Brahman.

In the world of the absolute as will, the self is freed from its imprisonment in egoistic individuality and entanglement in the wheel of bunya-baba and acquires its purity and other perfections. Mukti is not the isolation of kaivalva nor the abolition of consciousness, but is the consummation of moral endeavour, in which the divinised self realises the eternal values of life. It is a state of self-transcendence in which the moral life is perfected in the amoral, resulting in the transvaluation and conservation of all eternal values. Owing to the infinity of the essential quality, the mukta, as Dramida says, effects all things like the divinity.1 The mukta enjoys the perfections of Brahman with Brahman 2 and enjoys everything everywhere by his mere sankalpa or will without any external aid or constraint. He wills the true and the good and every conation is immediately fulfilled without the moral gulf between endeavour and end, between the apprehension of good and its attainment. The victim of samsāra is now a victor thereof and a self-ruler and enjoys absolute freedom from the shackles of karma and the taint of error, evil, ugliness and other imperfections. He is no longer subject to Vedic and Vedāntic imperatives and external determinations. The 'ought to be' of Karma Yoga is now fulfilled in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B. E., XLVIII, p. 99.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Tait. Up., Anand. i.

deeper 'is' of the world of Brahman. Every sankalpa or act of will is at once satisfied, and this satisfaction is enriched by fecundity and the novelties created by the self. The idea of a block universe in which the sat merely is a stirless, static being and the self emptied of its content is a void, is alien to the Visistādvaitic view of mōksa. The eternal realises itself in the temporal and is an eternal now. When space-time is transfigured, it adds to the infinite riches of spiritual experience. The mukta has the freedom to move in both the worlds. While the ascent to the world of eternity is an escape from the sorry scheme of samsāra, the descent of the freed self into the finite world expresses the cosmic freedom of the mukta, whose all-pervasive consciousness destroys the barriers of distance and duration. The worlds of  $l\bar{\imath}l\bar{a}$  and nitva constitute the world of Brahman as a whole and are comprised in the all-inclusive cosmic consciousness. By realising Brahman as the self of all the worlds, everything else is realised.

Though Brahman imparts its nature to the ātman, its mode, and infinitises its jñāna, the ātman persists in its monadic being with a view to utilising the freedom gained in mōkṣa in self-effacement and service to the Supreme Self, who is the ground of all existents. Īsvara alone has cosmic rulership and the stability of salvation is the gift of His redemptive will, and it is this jagad vyāpāra or universal lordship that marks the difference between the ātman that is the self-ruler and Brahman the world-ruler. He alone sustains the cosmic, moral and spiritual order and guarantees immortality to the mumukṣu. He plays with the ātman in the world of līlā and brahmanises it in the world of eternity. Though God's

 $<sup>^1</sup>$ jagad vyāpāravarjam prakaraņād asannihitatvācca I. Ve.  $S\bar{u}$ ., IV. iv. 17.

will is eternally self-realised, it is also realising itself in the making of the universe for the moulding of muktas. The finite self lives, moves and has its being in Brahman as the All-Self or sarva s'arīrin. The Sūtra in the S'ārīraka S'āstra dealing with cosmic rulership or jagat vyāpāra is a stumbling block to the monist, and he seeks to explain it away by the theory of two Brahmans and two muktas. But the logic of jīvanmukti as expounded by Māyāvāda exposes itself to the difficulties of subjectivism and pan-illusionism. Jīvanmukti to be absolute cannot admit of stages of stultification or negating negation and this would be possible only if the pure Advaita of eka-jīva be accepted with its solipsistic consequences. But practical Advaita with its faith in sastra and in the social order prefers the philosophy of nānā-jīva or many souls and Isvara and the religion of sarva mukti, and this end can be realised only by attaining the world of Brahman and His mukti prasāda or gift of deliverance. Bhāskara rejects the theory of two Brahmans. He also rejects the theistic idea of mukti as the realisation of the dependence of the jīva on *Īsvara*, who is absolutely different from it. But he describes two ways to mukti called krama mukti or gradual deliverance and sadyōmukti or immediate deliverance. The former is a progressive attainment of Brahman and provides for the theistic temper, and the latter satisfies the monistic yearning for immediate intuition. This interpretation has the advantage of real sympathy for the theistic view, but it strains the text to suit a pre-conceived theory. Visistādvaita seeks to . follow the primary and explicit meaning of sastra which alone has specialised in the exposition of moksa and accepts the literal sense of Brahman being the only Lord of the world or jagat. Brahman is the sarīrin of the ātman, the life of its life (ādhāra). and the inner ruler of the self (vidhāta), and the ātman exists

and knows that it exists for the satisfaction of Brahman. It is therefore nothing, has nothing and does nothing by itself. As Paramātman alone is the ground of the ātman and pulsates through its being, it is nothing without Him. Finite will exists, but has no value. As the inner ruler of the self, Brahman has the will to control all beings and is the real agent of all activity and action, and the jīva can do nothing by itself. The self belongs to Brahman and is a means to His satisfaction. Therefore it has nothing for itself. Brahman is Himself the ground and the goal, the end and endeavour. While matter also subserves the divine end, the mukta knows the meaning of svāmitva, and effaces his self-consciousness by service to the Lord and to the society of free and freed selves. The true value of freedom lies in attuning the finite will to the Infinite and making it His instrument. Paramapada is not society of freed selves, which seek to cooperate with Brahman and help Him in the evolution of His cosmic purpose, nor is it a world suffering from the contradictions and confusion of two wills, finite and infinite, with no chance of harmony. The first view betrays the egoism of the naivetheist, and the second, the intellectualism of the speculative monist. The idea of dasatva in the ethical monism of Visistādvaita does not imply slave-mentality extolled as a spiritual virtue, but brings out the infinite riches of the denial of egoism and attunement of the self to the cosmic purpose of universal redemption. Mukti is the realisation of the meaning of the relation between the jīva and Īsvara enshrined in the Upanisadic text "Thou art that", and there is more value in abolishing the ahankara of the jīva by self-effacement and the surrender of the self to the true Self than in dissolving and annulling the idea of Isvara and deifying the jīva. Kainkarya rasa brings out the joy of selfless service, but kaivalva rasa

savours of ātmarati or delight in the self, and it may lapse into moral stultification and egoism. In attuning his naughted will to that of the seṣī, the mukta as a modeless mode feels that he is like a lute on which the supreme singer plays. Love is fulfilled in surrender and service and its cosmic value lies in attuning itself to the infinite.

But it is the experience of the bliss of Brahman that expresses the supreme value of mukti in the Visistādvaitic sense of the ecstasy of the unitive consciousness.\'\text{The mukta} is immersed in the supreme and unsurpassable bliss of Brahmānubhava without losing his self-being. It is a state of sāyujya in which the unitive experience of bliss is present without the loss of self-existence. Vedāntic mukti is not the cessation of sorrow which is in vacuo, as in the Vaisesika theory, but is the positive experience of ananda which is ineffable and incommunicable. Even the Upanisad with its genius for explaining Brahmānubhava fails in its hedonistic and eudaemonistic description which is unparalleled in mystic power, to measure by a calculus of pleasures the bliss of Brahman, in which speculative thought melts away and expires in enjoyment. Viṣayānanda or the delight in the objects of sense due to contacting sense-object is really pleasant, but transient and trivial, and the thrills arising from excitement exhaust themselves by their very nature. Vivekānanda is the happiness of culture and contentment arising from sweet reasonableness and, though more enduring than pleasure, it has not the intrinsic value of atmananda or the satisfaction of self-realisedness. But even this state results from self-centredness and is therefore individualistic. Brahmānanda is the

<sup>1</sup> Ve. Sū., IV. iv. 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> vide, Chap. XXII of Vedānta Des'ika's Rahasyatraya Sāra.

blessedness of divine communion which passeth all understanding and the Brahmajñānī alone can give an experience-definition of that exalted state which transcends the imperfect medium of thought and language.1 The analytic intellect seeks to dissect the soul of such Brahmarasa and expresses it diagrammatically, as it were, in Vedāntic language. To the theist Brahmānanda is two-sided. It involves two centres of experience and a double fruition, and it admits of qualitative and quantitative difference. Bhāskara expounds it as ekībhāva or the abolition of the iīva-consciousness in intent and extent and absorption in the absolute. The merging of the self in the All-Self is like the dissolution of the fragrance of the flower in the air and the melting of the iceberg in the ocean. Advaitic bliss transcends the duality of the experient and the experienced object and the delight is not in tasting the rasa but in being bliss itself. But on the Visistādvaitic view of sāyujya the soul-hunger of God and the God-hunger of the soul are satisfied, and the separate consciousness of both is swallowed up in the enjoyment of bliss. Speaking of this state, the Upanisad bursts into ecstasy: "I eat as food him who eats food." 2 "As a man embraced by his beloved wife knows nothing that is without or within, even so the self when embraced by the All-Knowing Self knows nothing without and nothing within." Thus in Brahmānanda, the experients exist, but their feeling of separateness melts away in the irresistibility of ecstasy. "Even wisdom is swept away and sunk in rapture." In the rapt love of mystic union, the mukta is mad with God and sings about His glory and

¹ yatō vācō nivartante | aprāpya manasā saha |—Tait, Ānand. iv.

² aham annam annamadantam admi.—Tait. Up., Bhṛgu., X.

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  tad yathā priyayā striyā samparişvaktah na bāhyam kiñcana veda nāntaram evam evāyam puruṣah prājñenātmanā sampariṣvaktah na bāhyam kiñcana veda nāntaram.— $B_T$ . Up., VI. iii. 21.

goodness by chanting the songs of the Sāma Veda. The bliss of union is ever fecundative, and it enhances the value of the released state. The bliss of self-realisedness signifies the self that is realised and its value is eternally conserved.

In a true philosophy of religion, reality and value gotogether. The scientist-philosopher who thinks that the universe is indifferent to moral and spiritual values is as one sided as the ethical religionist who accepts the supremacy of faith and fights shy of reason. But the world of facts is also the realm of ends and values. To create a gap between reason and faith is not in the interests of either and this truth is well brought out in the history of western thought as well as in Indian philosophy. Spinoza as a mystic philosopher discovered the futility of following the mathematical method of philosophy, retraced his steps in his Ethics and rehabilitated philosophy. Kant likewise realised the failure of theoretical reason and turned to practical reason and judgment as the way of escape from agnosticism. Indian philosophy has no doubt been relatively free from the conflict between philosophy and religion; but certain monistic schools have rejected the reality of ethical religion and its ultimate values. S'ankara as a metaphysician says that avidyā as negation should be negated or stultified; but, as a believer in mumuksutva and mukti, he insists on moral and religious values. Certain Semitic religions, on the other hand, have faith in the supremacy of scriptural values but do not trust the method of philosophy. But a religion which is hostile to metaphysics stifles reason: man is essentially a thinking being and unless his faith is grounded in philosophy, it cannot claim any stability. Visistādvaita as a philosophy of religion posits and proves that reality is

realisable and is therefore the home of eternal values. Brahman is the absolute, and finite thought purified by the  $s\bar{a}dhanas$  can cross the barriers of finiteness and intuit the absolute. The  $Ved\bar{a}ntin$  as a philosopher can think God's thought after Him and realise His godliness By knowing Brahman as the reason of the universe, the  $j\bar{n}\bar{a}n\bar{\imath}$  is freed from worldliness and attains the realm of ethical values.

It is only when the soul reaches perfection in mukti that perfect satisfaction arises. The universe as the līlā vibhūti exists not for pleasure but for the moulding of the soul into a mukta. Cit and acit are eternally real and do not admit of degrees of reality. But values admit of levels or degrees. Values have meaning only in relation to the self and the satisfaction of its desires. In the phenomenal world the values of the evolving self are transient and perishing. The values of spiritual life are more stable and permanent than those of the sensuous life; but it is only in mukti that the jīva is perfected and brahmanised. The mukta is no longer affected by the flux of prakrti or tainted by evil, error or ugliness. The values of truth, goodness and beauty then attain their highest degree of perfection. Mukti is not merely freedom from ignorance, sin and sorrow, but is also the regaining of Paramapada which is the realm of eternal values. It is not true to say that values alone survive in the absolute and not persons. The freed self is not a vanishing illusion, nor does it merge in the whole like the dew-drop slipping into the shining sea. Its content is no doubt transmuted; but it is not true to say that it contributes to the whole. The only offering that the freed self makes to Brahman is self-gift without selfishness. Every value is trans-valued and perfected. The self gains itself by renouncing its empirical and exclusive nature.

acquires the colour, flavour and fragrance of Brahman (Brahma rūba, Brahmarasa and Brahmagandha) and is immersed in its everlasting and ever fecundative bliss. Freed from the shackles of brakrti and the limitations of time, it lives in spaceless space and timeless time, and it is supra-personal, but not impersonal. Brahman, the absolute, has, in the nitva vibhūti, no history 1; it has "no seasons, but all at once bears its leaves, blossom and fruit." In the world of līlā, there is endless progress involving endless duration due to the pitfalls and perils of metempsychosis. Infinite becoming is self-contradictory and purposeless, and becoming really presupposes being and a beginning and an end. In Paramapada, the iiva attains its infinite consciousness and regains the eternal values. Eternity is not the prolongation of the present life, nor is it personal survival, but is a state of selftranscendence, in which the self renounces the phenomenal shows that come and go and realises its noumenal state.

The world of Paramapada is a shining spiritual world, and is made of bliss itself, aprākṛta, paramākāsa and ānanda-lōka. It is the realm of suddhasatva made of a peculiar kind of matter, which is immutable. It is ajaḍa and is self-luminous like jñāna, and exists for the enjoyment of the ātman. Space and time do not disappear in the absolute, but are transfigured and contribute to the infinite riches of divine experience. Paramapada transcends the world of prakṛti or tamas, and has more resplendence than that of a million suns and stars. In its purity and perfection, it is beyond the obscuration of avidyā, the taint of evil and the stain of ugliness. It is a noumenal realm, which can neither be perceived by the senses

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> kālam sa pacate tatra na kālas tatra vaiprabhuh.—Mahābhārata, S'ānti parva, CXC. vi. 9. jñānānandamayā lökāḥ.—Srī Pāñcarātra.

nor conceived by the spatialising intellect. It cannot be adequately described by stastra and can only be intuited under the form of eternity by the nityasūri or the mukta. The supreme beauty of Paramapada cannot be adequately portrayed by the divine faculty of the poet, the painter or the musician. The bliss of anandaloka can be described only by the blissful mukta. The allegories employed by Plato and Plotinus to describe the 'ideas' of beauty and the glories of the spiritual worlds are poor symbols of the sublimity enshrined in the mystic language of the Kausītaki Upanisad and the Vaikuntha Gadya of Rāmānuja. Brahman has His own transcendental nature (svarūpa), infinity of perfections (guna) and supreme unsurpassed form of beauty  $(r\bar{u}pa)$ , which are alogical, amoral and supra-mystical. Metaphysics deals with what can be known, and that is the world of Brahman: ethics deals with what should be done, and that is kainkarva or service; and religion deals with what we may hope for, and that is the attainment of the immortality of bliss. this way metaphysical knowledge ripens into virtue, and virtue is crowned with happiness. The supreme end of life is the enjoyment of the bliss of Brahman. Logic and ethics have their consummation in aesthetics and mysticism, and the crowning glory of mystic experience is to revel in the beauty of anandaloka. Visistadvaita is the only philosophy of religion that identifies existence and value and defines Brahman as satyasya satyam or real reality which brahmanises the mukta and imparts its beauty and bliss to him.

Paramapada is the realm of self-luminous s'uddhasatva,<sup>2</sup> which is free from the parināmic or evolutionary modifications

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bγ. Up., IV. i. 20 and IV, iii. 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> svasattābhāsakam satvam gunasatvād vilakṣanam.—Srī Pāñcarātra.

of brakrti and the contracting influence of its three gunas. It is beyond prakrti and its twenty-three successive emanations, and it is not therefore conditioned by the five elements that compose the cosmic stuff, nor is it affected by the psycho-physical changes of the mind-body of the migrating jīva. In Paramapada, matter exists, without modification, in an abrākrta or non-material form; but its value in mukti is more important than its eternal existence. It shines in its own light as ajada, but it exists as a medium and means for the enjoyment of the mukta. Beauty consists of form and matter and can never be nirguna or attributeless, or niravayava or formless. Brahman who is nirguna and niravayava wills to be and becomes the Beautiful by creating a body of His own which has divine symmetry, softness, fragrance, colour and eternal youthfulness, with a view to ravishing the bound self, including the asura or demoniac type, out of its fleshly feeling and sinfulness, and imparts His beauty and bliss to the mukta. The radiant form of Brahman is bodied forth with matchless lyric beauty in the Bhagavata, the Vaikuntha Gadya and the Paramapada Sobana. Brahman beautifies, and is beautified by, the whole universe of cit and acit. The world of nature is His S'rī Vatsa or the emblem on His chest; and the spiritual world of the atman adorns His heart as the gem called the Kaustubha. While embodiment as the effect of karma is an impediment and may even be evil, embodiedness in Paramapada is the creative spontaneity of the aesthetic joy of Brahman. The jñāna of the mukta is all-pervasive; but if he desires the enjoyment of his cosmic freedom with a body, the desire is immediately realised, and he attunes himself to the will of Isvara as in the waking consciousness of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cf., sarvagandhah, sarvarasah—Ch. Up., III. xiv. 2 and 4.

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baddha state 1. Without a body he enjoys the same freedom divinely created as in the dream state of the baddha. In any case the freedom of the mukta is no longer obscured by avidyā or curtailed by karma. He enjoys eternal self-rule and universal sovereignty by the absolute abolition of the egoistic and individualistic standpoint and attunes himself to the redemptive will of *Īsvara* as the cosmic seṣī.

Time does not vanish in the abyss of the absolute as a stirless state of nothingness, but it enriches the blissful experience of Brahman, which is an eternal now. The nitya sūri is the spectator of all time in the supra-temporal state of Paramapada. The meaning and value of time in the Visistādvaitic system can be determined by distinguishing the three meanings of time expounded by western philosophers, namely, endless duration in the phenomenal realm, the eternal that transcends the temporal process, and the eternal that is in the temporal and beyond it. According to the first interpretation, time in the world of sense is finite and relative, but is not subjective, nor is it an internal sense, which is illusory. Time is the succession of events and not a series of exclusive moments. Nothing is static, and everything is in a state of ceaseless becoming. Things pass away and perish, as they come into being. Worlds are dissolved periodically at the end of each kalpa or epoch, and even Brahmas come and go in the ever-changing universe. The destruction and withdrawal of the cosmic process is itself conditioned by kāla or time. The time sense varies with the process of the suns and other celestial bodies, and the infinite time taken up by the passing away of the cosmos is but a day for Brahmā, and even

 $<sup>^1</sup>$ tanvabhāve sandhyavad upapatteh.—Ve. S $\overline{u}.$ , IV. iv. 13. Bhāve jāgradvat.—Ve. S $\overline{u}.$ , IV. iv. 14.

the cosmic will of *Iswara* is self-conditioned by kāla. But this view is not tenable, as pure duration without a being that endures is an abstraction. To say that time is beginningless is to be entangled in the fallacy of infinite regress, and endless process is self-contradictory. The view that being changes is unthinkable. Therefore the monist goes to the other extreme, when he contends that being is real and becoming is illusory. Thus, according to the second view, the eternal is pure being and the temporal is an illusion that exists but is not real. Progress and regress are self-discrepant, and they cannot be ascribed to pure being. The absolute has no history, and reality does not progress, though there may be progress in reality. Reality sublates and transcends the three-dimensional process. *Mukti* thus connotes the non-existence of time and the self-identity of Brahman. Whatever is is and whatever is not is not.

Visistādvaita gives a different exposition of the nature of time. It steers clear of the two extremes of endlessness and eternity by affirming the eternal as immanent in the temporal and transcending it. The līlā vibhūti, the world of splendour which exists for the sport of the Lord, is the play of the eternal in the temporal and the nitya vibhūti or eternal splendour of Paramapada is time as eternity. The former is the realm of karma or causal necessity without any contingency, and is the sphere of soul-making and is not a realm of relativity rooted in avidyā. The finite self feels its finitude, and seeks freedom from the passing shows of empirical life by attaining immortality. As the eternal alone gives meaning to the temporal process and is its final consummation, the reality of the progressive attainment of eternal life is assured. Moral and spiritual endeavour is a sādhana for such self-transcendence. Truth leads to the more of itself and is the passage of MUKTI 499

the self from the  $l\bar{\iota}l\bar{a}$  vibh $\bar{\iota}ti$  to the nitya vibh $\bar{\iota}ti$  which is the infinitely more glorious 'yonder'. In the former, time is finite and affected by the guṇas, while in the latter, it is not causally related, but is infinite and beyond the plane of spacetime. Sams $\bar{\iota}ta$  is determined by the time series, but mukti determines the time series by the self gaining mastery over it. The Lord is the link of love between the two realms, and soul-making is the goal of cosmic  $l\bar{\iota}l\bar{\iota}a$ , and, in the attainment of eternal life, the self transcends the transient dimensions. The mukta views everything under the form of eternity, and his bliss of  $s\bar{\iota}ayujya$  is ever creative and is an eternal now. It is like a symphony in which each note sweetens the whole effect and is sweetened by it; but no analogy drawn from human experience can adequately bring out the ecstasy of eternal life.

The nature of mukti is so rich and varied in content that it cannot be exhausted by philosophic labels and formulae. Brahman is the sat without a second, but Brahmānubhava differs with different muktas, and this truth brings out the uniqueness of each experience and its universality. The Chandogya Upanisad (III. xiv. 1) expounds it in the light of the principle of tat kratu nyāya. The mukta is free to realise the infinite in infinite ways, and this freedom is determined by his own will. Every meditation on Brahman ends in the attainment of Brahman. The nature of what is attained in mukti is determined by the nature of the meditation of the mumuksu (Ve. Sū., IV. iii. 14). In discussing the value of the thirty-two meditations on Brahman, the Sūtrakāra, in III. iii. 57, raises the important question whether they are all compulsory or optional and decides in favour of the latter alternative on account of the identity of the result. The methods and the starting points may vary with the

psychological variations of mumuksutva, but the Vedāntic goal is the same, namely, the intuition of Brahman, which is of the nature of supreme unsurpassable Bliss. Brahman, as the Vākyakāra says, has qualities, because the meditation on Brahman defines His qualities. The determining attributes of Brahman are satyatva, jñātrtva, anantatva, apahatabābmatva and ānanda and as every essential quality connotes the subject of which it is the definition, it follows that every meditation includes these qualities and that Brahman is their subject. The other ideas of God like saulabhya and sausīlya are derived from the definition and refer only to specific upāsanas or forms of meditation (III. iii. 11 et seq). Thus every upāsana has its adequacy and efficacy in securing the stability of mukti. Brahman is the goal of the spiritual endeavour of the mumuksu, and every specific experience of mukti is the immediate experience of Brahman itself. The mumuksu may be a jñānī or metaphysician interested in the unitive consciousness of avibhaga, visista aikya or Brahmabhava, or a yōgin who delights in intuiting Brahman as his inner light in which the flickerless flame of ātma jyōtis shines in param ivotis or the boundless light of Brahman. The man of active temperament dedicates himself to selfless service to the Lord and His devotees and prefers kainkarya rasa to Brahmabhāva. The mystic is drawn by premā and thrilled by the touches of the alluring beauty of Brahman, which ravishes even the ascetic and the dialectician, and changes the jñānīs or rsis of Dandaka into the Göpīs of Brndāvana. The mumuksu meditates on some single quality of Brahman according to his inclination and even the eternal seers enjoy only one aspect of the divine nature. The bliss of Brahman is however irresistible and every Vedāntin seeks Ānanda as the supreme end and aim of life.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. B. E., XLVIII. p. 99.

#### CHAPTER XX

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF VIS'IŞTĀDVAITIC VAIŞŅAVISM

BRIEF history of S'rī Vaisnavism and Vaisnavism in general is now attempted before the concluding chapter is taken up, as it throws light on the practical value of its philosophy. S'rī Vaisnavism is as old as Hinduism and it has been extolled through the ages as the religion of redemption. Vaisnavism connotes the religion in which Visnu, the eternally pure and perfect, enters into the history of humanity with a view to redeeming the bound self from sinfulness and selfishness and vaisnavise its nature. S'rī Vaisnavism makes the meaning more explicit by defining the dual function of Vișnu as S'riyahpati, which consists in universal redemption. While Visistādvaita defines Brahman as the Godhead that creates, sustains and destroys the universe with a view to brahmanising the finite self, Vaisnavism, as its religious aspect, identifies the same Godhead as unity in trinity with Visnu who pervades all jīvas and vaisnavises their nature. In the history of Indian philosophy, Visistadvaitic Vaisnavism occupies a central position both as philosophy and as religion, as a meeting of the extremes of monism and pluralism and of non-dualism and theism. Every system of faith is, historically speaking, a response to the needs of the age which gave it birth or brought it to the forefront and, from this standpoint, it may be proved that S'ankara came to correct the atheistic teaching of Buddhism by re-establishing the Hindu view of the eternity of the Veda and restoring the Vedāntic truths of Brahmavidyā. Though S'ankara accepted all the six faiths prevalent in his age, he tried to abolish the evil practices connected with vāmācāra and prefer the sātvika faith in Bhagavān, bhakti and the bhāgavata religion. At any rate, his practical Advaita is not incompatible with Visistādvaita. But the God-destroying dialectics of Māyāvāda dormant in S'ankara's theory became pronounced in certain schools of post-S'ankara Advaita and the timespirit required a philosopher that could rescue Vedānta from the evils of pan-illusionism and that was the mission of Rāmānuja. Though Rāmānuja formulated Visistādvaita, he was not its founder as his mission was only to systematise the traditional teachings of the rsis and the Alvars as expounded by Nāthamuni and Āļavandār. Like post-S'ankara Advaita, post-Rāmānuja Visistādvaita gave rise to different schools of Vaisnavism like the Vadakalai sect represented by Vedanta Desika and the Tenkalai sect represented by Pillailökācārya. In spite of the varieties of Vaisnavite teachings, their common aim is devotion to Visnu as the All-Self and Redeemer of all.

The varieties of Vaiṣṇavite experience by the ṛṣis, the Bhāgavatas and the Āļvārs afford the data for the formulation of Visiṣṭādvaita, and the twin truths handed down traditionally by the ṛṣis and the Āļvārs are embodied in the system and are known as "Ubhaya Vedānta." It is wrong to say that it is an amalgam of two different cultures or a fusion of the divergent currents of philosophy and popular cults. It is essentially a S'ārīraka S'āstra or synoptic philosophy whose aim is not only

to seek the whole or soul of knowledge but to extend the hospitality of its divine ideas to all humanity. While Visistādvaita stresses the metaphysical side, S'rī Vaisnavism emphasises the moral and mystic sides, and the two are inseparable and really one. It is summed up by Nammalvar in the opening verse of his Tiruvāimoli, 'He who is Bliss (uyarnalam) imparts the illumining and illuminating bhakti (matinalam) to the mumuksu.' Bhakti is more than the intellectual love of God, as it is the life of man in the love of God and includes philosophic knowledge and religious feeling. The history of Vaisnavism is mainly the biography of its best men, the Alvars and the Acarvas or the seers and the prophets, recorded in its Guruparamparas. Though the mystic forgets himself in God and the Acarya works for world-welfare, the two are not different, as, in S'rī Vaisnavism, love of God and service to humanity go together. Nammālvār is the chief of the Alvars who directly intuited Brahman, and he is in a line with Vāmadeva of the S'rutis and S'uka and Prahlada of the Bhāgavata; Rāmānuja is the foremost of the Vedāntic exponents of the Visistādvaitic system. The biography of seers and prophets is often naturally mixed up with the record of the miracles wrought by them and their mystic experiences. But to the student of Vedānta, the spiritual side alone is relevant and not the supernatural, nor even the historic. It is. however, desirable that the lives and teachings of the Alvars and the Acaryas are briefly sketched as a background to the study of Visistādvaita or Rāmānuja darsana.

# Pre-Rāmānuja Visistādvaita

It is a cardinal teaching of S'rī Vaiṣṇavism that God who is transcendental Love incarnates again and again into

history without renouncing His infinity 1 with a view not only to redeeming the wicked man from his career of wickedness, but to seeking the  $j\bar{n}\bar{a}n\bar{\imath}$  or philosopher-mystic  $^2$  who is His very self or ātmā. The Vedas, the Itihāsas, the Purānas, the Pāñcarātra and the Dramida Veda are successive revelations of the redemptive love of God. This truth is well brought out in the divine life of the Alvars as revealed by their inspired poetic utterances. The prophecy of the Bhāgavata that in the Kali Yuga, the rsis devoted to Nārāyana would be born on the banks of the Cauvery, the Tamraparni and the Pālār in Drāvidadesa or in the land of Agastya3 was fulfilled in the lives and teachings of the Alvars. Tradition ascribes the age of the  $\bar{A}lv\bar{a}rs$ , twelve in number, to the beginning of the Kali Yuga (more than 5,000 years ago); but modern historical research assigns it to the period between the second century A.D. and the eighth century A.D. The determination of the exact dates of their birth is outside the scope of this work, which is concerned only with their divine life. The Alvars were God-intoxicated mystics and their one and only aim in life was to contact God in His beauteous aprākrta form and communicate the joy of their communion with Him to humanity. They were specialists in spirituality to whom the only proof of the being of God was being in God and holding converse with Him. They had an insight into the nature of Nārāyaṇa as their inner self and in their religious outlook they saw Nārāyaṇa pervading all things. They insisted on the need for inner purity and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> svam eva rūpam tattatsajātiyasamsthānam sva svabhāvam ajahadeva kurvan teşu teşu lōkēsvavatīryāvatīrya.—Rāmānuja's *Gītābhāṣya*, Introduction.

janma karmaca me divyam.-B. G., IV. 9.

² paritrāṇāya sādhūnām.—B.G., IV. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Book XI, Chap. V, verses 38-40 as quoted also by Vedānta Des'ika in the introductory chapter of his *Rahasyatraya Sāra*.

personal experience and, without in any way breaking with traditional and institutional faith, disseminated spiritual knowledge to all without distinction of birth and status in life and thus revitalised Hinduism. Though they were born into different castes and at different times, they all had the same instinct for the infinite, lived, moved and had their being in divine love or Bhagavat-premā and poured forth their experiences through Tamil pāsurams or hymns. They were all messengers of God who spread the Visistādvaita gospel that Brahman, the sarīrin of all, has the chief quality of saulabhya even on the perceptual level and that by rooting out ahankāra and by self-surrender to His love, every man can attain mukti. Every man is the son of God and can attain salvation by seeking God and responding to His love. The highest end of life is not even mukti in the world yonder, but is bhakti here and now, because love is love for ever, absolute, unconditioned and eternal. Man's only responsibility in life is response to the love of God. The lofty view of Vedāntic philosophy was thus turned into Vaisnavite religion; and instead of vivisecting Hinduism into the domain of philosophy for the few and religion for the many, this process vivifies and invigorates Hinduism and makes it live for ever as the philosophy of religion.

Though all the  $\bar{A}!v\bar{a}rs$  had a genius for God, each gave poetic expression to his experience in his own way. The earliest of the  $\bar{A}!v\bar{a}rs$  were a trio called respectively Poigai, Bhūtam and Pai. They were endowed with the highest  $v\bar{v}gic$  insight. They were born in the same month and in the same year on consecutive days in Conjeeveram, Mahābalipuram and Mylāpūr respectively. The most inspiring episode in their life is the story of their meeting in a narrow room in Tirukōilūr,

a place in South Arcot District. Having sought shelter in a narrow passage on a dark rainy night, the three were squeezed together in that narrow room, where one alone could lie, two could sit or three stand. Suddenly they all felt a strange Presence and to discern it they lit their lamps of spiritual wisdom and were gifted with a vision of the beatific form of God who was pressing them so closely. At once they broke into song and the realisation of each Alvar took the form of a Tiruvandādi of one hundred verses. These are the earliest of the Prabandhas addressed mostly to the Lord of the Seven Hills as the God of Gods. Tirumalisaiālvār who came next was so called because he was born in Tirumalisai, a village near Madras. By a process of philosophic and spiritual induction, he intuited the supremacy of Nārāyana and he is wellknown for his monotheistic faith and fervour and vogic introversion. His two works are known as the Nanmukhan Tiruvandādi and the Tiruccanda Viruttam. The religion of bhakti sown by the first three Alvars blossomed in the fourth and came to full fruition in Nammālvār. Nammālvār, also known as Māran, S'atakopa and Parānkus'a, is venerated as the supermystic of Vaisnavism and its super-prapanna or founder of the prapatti school. As already mentioned, he was born in Kurukur. now known after him as Alvartirunagari, in Tinnevelly on the banks of the Tamraparni. Like S'uka, he was conceived and born in godliness. With his instinct for the infinite, his hunger and thirst were only for God. His divine love was a divine gift and he was immersed in it for sixteen years at the foot of a tamarind tree till he came down to the waking state and gave articulate expression to his infinite avā or premā in the soul-stirring poems known as the Tiruviruttam, the

 $<sup>^{1}</sup>$  anbilanri  $\bar{a}z$ hiānai yāvarkāņavallare? (Who can see him except by love?)

Tiruvāsiriyam, the Periya Tiruvandādi and the Tiruvāimoli. The love of God can come only from God, the infinite, and the Alvar says that his Tiruvaimoli was really the word of God expressed through the instrumentality of his human medium. The Tiruvaimoli is extolled by Vedanta Desika as the Dramidopanisad and is unsurpassed in mystic literature for its spiritual depth and fervour. The Tiruvāimoli is, in fact, equated with Vedānta, and each is interpreted in terms of the other and the two are fused into a single system which enables the philosopher-mystic to realise the alogical state of divine life transcending the limits of linguistics and logic. Nammāļvār is the very heart of Visistādvaitic mysticism and is described symbolically as the soul; of which the first three Alvars are the mind and the other Alvars, the body. It was given to Madhurakavi Āļvār to discover Nammāļvār and though his only work, the Kanninunciruttambu, is a short poem of eleven verses on Nammālvār, it forms an integral part of the four thousand Divya Prabandhas and brings out the veneration in which the Alvar was held by S'rī Vaisnavas.

Kulasekhara, who ruled over three principalities on the west coast (Kolli, Kūḍal and Kōḷi; Cera, Pāṇḍya and Cōla), became an Āṭvār by the intensity of his devotion to God. His 105 verses are grouped together as the Perumāṭ Tirumoṭi and are noted for their passionate fervour towards God and godly men. A poor Brahmin of S'rī-villiputtūr, Viṣṇucitta by name, who spent his time in offering flowers to God, was gifted with divine lore and love and is known as Periyāṭvār. He was able to establish in a polemic discussion at the Pāṇḍyan king's court, the supremacy of Vaiṣṇavite monotheism. He was so much immersed in the love of child Kṛṣṇa that he forgot His divinity and

tended Him with the tenderness of Yasoda. This kind of bhakti is known in Vaisnava mysticism as vātsalya bhāva. His songs called the Periva Tirumoli are the outpourings of his Kṛṣṇā love which are as soul-stirring as the language of S'uka in the "Bhāgavata." Periyalvar adopted as his daughter Andal or Goda who had a miraculous birth like Sītā. Her heart was set on wedding S'rī Krsna and her pining for love and her assaults on the beloved as described in her Tiruppāvai and Tirumoļi can bear comparison only with the mystic ardour of the Gopis. The Tiruppāvai portrays, with rare lyrical beauty, the scene of her approaching the Sleeping Beauty of Brndavan at day dawn with other damsels and awakening Him from His strange sleep. The Lord of Love could not resist her maddening love and their spiritual marriage took place in the shrine of S'rīrangam when she rushed into the arms of Love and was lost in the bliss of communion.

Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi Āļvār, in his moving hymns, the Tiruppalli Elucci and the Tirumālai, seeks to awaken the Lord
of Raṅga or the theatre of līlā, from His yōganidrā and make
Him respond to the call of bhakti. He exhorts humanity to give
up their career of sin and seek the redemptive love of Raṅga.
True to his name, he cleansed himself with the holy dust of
the feet of devotees when they entered the shrine of the Holy
and effaced himself in service. Tiruppāṇālvār was a pañcama
born near S'rīraṅgam and, in his ten immortal verses beginning
with "Amalan," he adores God as the Holy, the Pure and the
Perfect (amalan, vimalan, nirmalan) and feels blessed by the
fact that divine love invaded his inner being and cleansed him
of all sin. Tradition has it that the Lord of Raṅga commanded
the temple priest in a dream to carry the Āļvār on his shoulders

from the outskirts of the city to His inner shrine whence his name Munivahanan. The next Alvar was Tirumangai Mannan, also called Kaliyan and Parakālan, who was born in a Vellāla family in Sīyālī. He was a military chief who was weaned away from his worldly career by the redemptive grace of God. In his poetic works called the Periya Tirumoli, the Tirukkuruntāndakam, the Tiruneduntāndakam, the S'iriva Tirumadal, the Periya Tirumadal and the Elukūrrirukkai, which are extolled as the six Vedāngas of the Drāvida Veda, he sings the glory of God as the permanent incarnation of mercy in all His temples from Badarinath to Tiruppullāni near Rāmesvaram. He begins his Periya Tirumoli in his characteristic way with a confession of his previous sinfulness followed by the feeling of security obtained by uttering the holy name of Nārāvana, and ends it with the joy of mukti or freedom from the fear of samskra.

The hymns of the  $\bar{A} | v\bar{a}rs$ , four thousand in number, were collected and collated by Nāthamuni in the manner of the four Vedas arranged by Vyāsa, and are called the Divya Prabandha or Tamil Veda, and they contain the quintessence of the Upaniṣads. The first part includes the hymns of Periyāļvār, Āṇḍāļ, Kulasekhara, Tirumaļisai, Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi and Madhurakavi; the second consists of three works of Tirumaṅgai Āļvar; the third is the Tiruvāimoļi of Nammāļvar; and the fourth is made up of the three Andādis of the first three Āļvārs, one Andādi of Tirumaḥisai, three poems of Nammāļvār and three of Tirumaṇgai Āļvār. Vedānta Desika includes the Rāmānuja Nūrṛandādi in the Four Thousand, but the Tenkalai Ācāryas compute 4,000 without the Rāmānuja Nūrṛandādi.

The Alvars are esteemed for their austerity and selfrenouncement and for their missionary zeal in promoting the spiritual welfare of all beings. They do not claim to be specially chosen by God with any special covenant, as they regard every man as the son of God who can eventually attain salvation. To them the only true miracle is the miracle of mercy or arul, and it is almighty and accessible to all.

While the Alvars were divers into divinity, the Acarvas that followed them became the expositors of the Alvars' experience and the apostles of S'rī Vaisnavism as the system is now known. Their task was to interpret it in terms of Visistādvaitic thought and Visistādvaitic philosophy in terms of S'rī Vaisnavism and spread the gospel of prapatti among all persons. They taught that Brahman is the sarīrin of all persons and things and though He is the One without a second metaphysically, He also exists as S'rīman Nārāyaṇa in the interests of world redemption. It is untenable to say that S'rī Vaisnavism has a South Indian origin, as it has its eternal foundation in the law of love and is not limited by geographical and historical barriers. This truth is borne out by the life and teachings of Nathamuni, the founder of the Ubhaya Vedānta school and first pontiff of S'rī Vaisnavism. He was a descendant of the Bhāgavata immigrants from the Gangetic valley to the south who came to disseminate the Bhāgavata religion of bhakti. He was born at Mannārgudi in the South Arcot District in 824 A.D. and even in his youth he was given to yōgic introversion and became a muni. Tradition ascribes to him the miraculous discovery of the lost Tiruvāimoli of Nammālvār and then of the entire Prabandha. While at Kumbakonam, he happened to hear the recital of the soul-stirring hymns of Nammalvar beginning with

"Ārāvamude," a word which connotes the immortal bliss of Brahman or divine deliciousness. The ascetic then realised the sweetness of those divine songs and became eager to recover the whole work. He went to Tirunagari where the whole Prabandha was miraculously revealed to him by the Alvar himself after the recital of the verses beginning with "Kanninuñciruttāmbu" sung by Madhurakavi Āļvār about Nammāļvār. Nāthamuni grouped the Prabandha on the Vedic model into four parts, each containing nearly one thousand The recitation of the Prabandhas was made an integral part of temple worship at S'rīrangam and this practice is even now followed in all S'rī Vaisnava temples. This innovation effected a silent revolution in temple worship, as it raised the status of the *Prahandha* to the level of the *Veda* and liberalized the meaning of Revelation. Nathamuni's Nyāya Tatva, which is now lost, was the first modern treatise on Visistādvaita and it was elaborated by later ācāryas. A few quotations from it are given in the Nyāya Siddāñjana of Vedānta Desika. It is said that Nāthamuni knew of a secret yōga which had the ease and efficacy of securing mukti with minimum endeavour and that he was anxious to communicate it to his grandson Alavandar. But Alavandar could not meet his grand-father's disciple at the appointed time and so the precious yōga was lost to humanity. Nāthamuni devoted all his time in his old age to the practice of samādhi and passed away in 920 A.D. He was succeeded by Uyyakkondar or Pundarīkāksa and he by Manakkālnambi or Rāma Misra.

The next important milestone in the history of S'rī Vaiṣṇavism is marked by the life and teachings of Alavandār or Yāmunācārya, the grandson of Nāthamuni. Even as a boy, he showed his prodigious learning and skill when he accepted

the challenge of Akkialvan, the court Pandit of the Cola king, made to his guru and easily vanquished him in the learned assembly of the king by a clever puzzle. He was at once greeted by the queen as "Alavandar" for having conquered the proud poet, and was granted a portion of the kingdom according to the terms of the polemic duel. He lived a life of luxurious ease, when a sudden change came over him after an interview with the old teacher, Rāma Misra, who intimated to him the news of the patrimony bequeathed to him by his grandfather in the form of a valuable treasure imbedded between two rivers. He eagerly followed the guru to take possession of the treasure, and when he was shown the shining shrine at S'rīrangam, he became converted, was overjoyed and took sannyāsa. His whole life was thereafter dedicated to spirituality and service, the twin ideals of a true Vaisnava, and he made S'rīrangam a veritable Vaikuntha on earth. As a philosopher, his main task was the criticism of Advaita, and he was an eminent controversialist and author of valuable treatises on Vedānta. His famous work, the Siddhi Traya explains the main teachings of Visistādvaita, following the tradition of Bodhayana, Pramida, and Tanka and in accordance with logical thinking; it consists of three sections-"Ātma Siddhi," "Īsvara Siddhi" and "Samvit Siddhi." His masterly summary in the Gītārtha Sangraha of the truths of the Gitā is a luminous exposition in about thirty slokas of the nature of prakṛti, puruṣa and Puruṣōttama and of the need for bhakti and prapatti as the supreme means to mokṣa.1 It was later developed by Rāmānuja and further elaborated by Vedanta Desika.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It is further summarised in the verse of that work as follows: "svadharmajnānavairāgyasādhyabhaktyaikagōcarah l Nārāyanah param brahma gitāsāstre samīritah ll "

In his Agamaprāmānya, he controverts the conclusion of the Advaitin that the Pāñcarātra, as expounded in the Sātvata and the Pauskara Samhitas, has no Vedic authority and that its teaching is opposed to Vedānta. As the word of Nārāyana, it contains the essentials of Vedānta, is accepted by the Sūtrakāra and extolled by him in the Mahābhārata. Owing to its comprehensive definition of Brahman as Vāsudeva who is the same as Bhagavan or the God of religion. and its exalted moral or satvika ideal of conduct which explains every act of duty as the adoration of Brahman, it is Vedānta applied to practical life. Says Thibaut: "The Sūtrakāra closes the polemical section of the second chapter with a defence of the doctrine which, in spite of objections, has to be viewed as the true one." But really there are no objections to the tantra, as the forms of Vasudeva are His incarnational manifestations and not emanations and as the eternity of the self is nowhere rejected. The Ekāyana S'ākha from which the system is deduced is traced to the S'ukla (white) Yajur Veda and the moral and spiritual austerity of life led by the Ekāvana is evident in his daily conduct. The five-fold vajña consisting of abhigamana, upādāna, ijyā, svādhyāya and  $v\bar{o}ga$  is nothing but the dedication of the daily conduct to the indwelling Deity. True yajña is but the killing of egoism and the offering of the self to God. Alavandar's Stotra-ratna, a master-piece of lyrical devotion, reveals his discerning faith in Nārāyaṇa and S'rī and the intense humility of the philosopher-devotee who pours forth his heart-felt. bhakti in soul-stirring verses to which there is no parallel in Stotra literature. In praise of S'rī or Laksmī, Ālavandār sang a separate poem of four s'lokas, which, for that reason. is known as Catusloki, and it is the earliest of the stotras sung about S'rī and furnishes the foundation and basis of later

works on S'rī Tatva such as those of Āļvān, Bhaṭṭar and Vedānta Desika. Another work, Puruṣa Nirṇaya, is also ascribed to Āļavandār. His disciples are believed to have been fifteen in number, of whom five are said to have taught Rāmānuja, the next great ācārya.

### Rāmānuja

Rāmānuja was born in S'rīperumbūdūr near Kānci in the year 1017 A.D. as the son of Asūri Kesava Somavājī and Kāntimatī, sister of S'rīsaila Pūrna, the grandson of Yāmunācarva. From his childhood he showed signs of Vedantic genius and he was sent to Kāñci to have a course of studies in Vedānta under the great Advaita teacher Yādavaprakāsa. It is said that his teachings did not satisfy the budding Visistādvaitin. One day, when Yādava explained the Taittirīva text "satvam, iñānam, anantam Brahma" in terms of absolute identity, the disciple felt that identity was no explanation at all and reconstrued the text by saving that Brahman is and has satyam, jñānam and anantam as His essential ontological attributes. The guru's exposition at another time of the Upanisadic description "kapvāsam" of the lotus to which the beauteous eyes of Bhagavān were compared by translating that expression as the red posteriors of the monkey. brought hot tears of grief to the eyes of Rāmānuja, and he immediately corrected the ugly analogy by giving the true meaning of that term as the well developed lotus that blossoms at day-dawn.1 These reinterpretations aroused the anger and jealousy of the teacher who, in consultation with some trusted disciples, arranged for a pilgrimage to Benares with the evil idea of drowning Rāmānuja in the Ganges and attributing it to

gambhirāmbhas samudbhūta sumṛṣṭa nāla ravikara vikasita puṇḍarika. . . .

accident. On the way, Rāmānuja was apprised of the conspiracy and he escaped at dead of night while they were passing through a wilderness. Weary and foot-sore, Rāmānuja wandered several days till a hunter and a huntress met him and offered to take him to Kānci, which they said was their destination too. When they were very near Kāñci, the couple suddenly disappeared after asking Rāmānuja for a little water and on his looking around, the lofty towers of the temple of Lord Varadarāja in Kāñci greeted his wondering eyes. Rāmānuja at once realised that Lord Varada and His Consort had rescued him in that miraculous manner and as they had asked for water he made it a point from that day onwards to fetch a potful every day from a well near the spot where They disappeared, to be used for Their daily būja. Yädava later on became a disciple of Rāmānuja. At this time, Saint Tirukkacci Nambi had daily contact and converse with the Lord, and Rāmānuja came under his spiritual influence.

Rāmānuja never met Āļavandār face to face though the latter had seen Rāmānuja and, unwilling to disturb his studies, had blessed him from a distance. Five of Āļavandār's disciples, as already stated, imparted the teachings of Āļavandār to young Rāmānuja who was to become the chief propagator of Visiṣṭādvaita. Mahāpūrṇa or Periyanambi was Rāmānuja's principal ācārya who initiated him into the meaning of the Dvaya Mantra at Madhurāntakam. Under Gōṣṭīpūrṇa (Tirukkōṭṭiyūr Nambi), Rāmānuja revised the rahasyārthas or the meaning and significance of the rahasya mantras which play a very important part in the life and knowledge of a S'rī Vaiṣṇava. From Tirumālaiyāṇḍān and Āļavandārāļvān Rāmānuja learnt the Tiruvāimoļi and from Tirumalai Nambi, S'rīmad Rāmāyaṇa. The truths of S'rī Vaiṣṇavism

communicated by Lord Varada to Tirukkacci Nambi were also duly imparted to him: "I am the supreme truth, the way and the goal. The world of souls is different from Me and depends on Me as its source and sustenance. Prapatti is the way to salvation." Thus equipped with the knowledge of spiritual truths and the sadhanas to mukti gained from specialists, Rāmānuja became qualified to enter on his mission of spreading the gospel of Visistādvaitic Vaisnavism and to become a world teacher. To dedicate himself wholly to the cause of religion and the service of humanity, he joined the sannyāsa order and became Yatirāja or the prince of sannyāsins on account of his austere and ascetic life. While he settled down at S'rīrangam and prepared himself to carry out his mission, he had to meet an Advaitic controversialist, Yajñamūrtī by name, and after seventeen days' disputation the opponent was defeated.

He started on a pilgrimage round the country from Rāmesvaram to Badarināth by the west coast and returned via the east coast. With his ever faithful disciple Kūresva (Kūrattāļvān), he reached S'rīnagar and secured a manuscript copy of the Bōdhāyana Vṛtti, which Kūresva, with his prodigious memory, was able to learn by heart even at the very first reading. He was thus enabled to bring out his S'rī Bhāṣya by literally following tradition and is said to have earned the title of "Bhāṣyakāra" in Kaṣmīr from Sarasvatī herself. At this time occurred the persecution of the Vaiṣṇavas by the Cōla king, Kulōttunga Cōla I, who, in his bigoted zeal for the spread of S'aivism, tried to repress the dissenters by capital punishment. As Kūresva and the venerable Mahāpūrṇa refused to change their faith, their eyes were plucked out. Rāmānuja's retirement to Mysore at this critical period was an

epoch in its religious history, as it led to the conversion of a large number of Jains and also of Bittideva, the king of the Hōysālas, followed by the construction in 1099 of the city of Melkōt and the consecration of a temple for S'elva Pillai. His return to S'rīraṅgam in 1118 after an absence of two decades was hailed with joy by the whole S'rī Vaiṣṇava community and the remaining years of his life were devoted to the consolidation of his missionary work by organising temple worship and establishing seventy-four spiritual centres in different parts of the country, presided over by his disciples, to popularise Visiṣṭādvaita. He passed away in 1137 full of honours after a long span of 120 years.

The works of Rāmānuja are as valuable as his life, and they were the fulfilment of his promise in youth to carry out the message of Āļavandār to systematise the whole teaching of Visiṣṭādvaita in its metaphysical, moral and mystical aspects. In his Vedārtha Sangraha, he analyses the defects of Advaita, Bhedābheda and S'aivism and harmonises the apparently conflicting texts of the Upaniṣads by his foundational principle of the s'arīra-s'arīrī relation. The Vedānta Sāra and the Vedānta Dīpa are short treatises on the Sūtras and bring to light the essentials of Vedānta. But his magnum opus is the immortal S'rī Bhāṣya which is an authoritative exposition of the Sūtras as S'ārīraka S'āstra in the truest sense of the term. His Gītā Bhāṣya is a development of the Gītārtha Sangraha of Āļavandār and explains the building up of bhakti and constructs a ladder as it were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a full account of his life and teaching, the reader is referred to the contemporary work of Amudanār's Nūrṛandādi in Tamil, Vedānta Des'ika's Yatirājasaptati and Maṇavāļa Mahāmunigaļ's Yatirāja Vins'ati.

 $<sup>^2</sup>$  The  $Srutaprak\bar{a}sika$  is a commentary on the  $Sr\bar{\imath}$   $Bh\bar{a}sya$  composed later by Sudars'ana Bhaṭṭa; the  $Bh\bar{a}va$   $Prak\bar{a}sika$  is a gloss on this work; and the Tatva  $T\bar{\imath}ka$  is a fuller gloss by Vedānta Des'ika.

from the world of prakrti to the realm of Purusottama. his S'araṇāgati Gadya, Rāmānuja gives a classic exposition of the nature and value of brabatti. The S'rīranga Gadyam reveals the devotional fervour of Rāmānuja to the Lord of S'rīrangam which is praised as Vaikuntha on earth. The Vaikuntha Gadya is a rapturous outpouring on the transcendental beauty and bliss of Vaikuntha. In another prose work called the Nityam, Rāmānuja elaborates the ideal of the daily life of a true paramaikāntin. The Ārāyirappadi, the first Visistādvaitic commentary on the Tiruvāimoļi of Nammāļvār, is traced to his inspiring influence. This was composed by his chief disciple Kurukesa (Tirukkurugaippirān Pillān). A commentary on the Visnu Sahasranāma was written by Parāsara Bhatta in compliance with Rāmānuja's instructions. In this way and by these works the dream of Alavandar to formulate Visistādvaitic Vaisnavism became an accomplished fact. These great works are ever-enduring monuments of Rāmānuja's synthetic genius. To his followers Rāmānuja is the Udaiyavar or owner of the two worlds and this truth expresses the S'rī Vaiṣṇava loyalty to the Ācārya and their living faith in him as the guru that holds the keys of earth and heaven. To the philosopher, he is the Bhāsyakāra and his S'rī Bhāṣya is the exposition par excellence of the Vedānta Sūtras.

It is difficult to appraise the worth of this great synoptic thinker, prophet and seer. As the exponent of *Vedānta* as a philosophy of religion, he reconciles the claims of philosophy with the demands of religion and is between S'ankara and Mādhva not only chronologically but also philosophically. With his practical social idealism and essential humanism, he insists on the equality of all *jīvas* owing to the in-dwelling of God in their hearts without in any way undermining the Gītā

ideal of varnāsrama and each man's svadharma.¹ He was not merely the representative of his age but a philosopher for all time who combined in himself the profundity of a thinker and the humility of a saint. With his magnetic personality, encyclopaedic knowledge and brilliant powers of exposition, he summed up in his long life all that was good in the known past, namely, the heart of Buddha, the head of S'ankara and the apostolic fervour of the Semitic religions. Even after ten centuries of his passing away, the dynamic influence of bhakti that was created in his life-time is not only not exhausted, but is ever on the increase.

## Post-Rāmānuja Visistādvaita

Rāmānuja at the close of his career entrusted the spiritual care of the Visiṣṭādvaita community to seventy-four Simhā-sanādhipatis or apostles. The chief among them were Kurukesa or S'aṭakōpa, better known as Piḷḷān, who wrote the authoritative gloss called the Six Thousand (from the number of granthas² in it) on the Tiruvāimoļi of Nammāļvār, Praṇatārtihara, who received the title of Vedāntōdayana (Udayana being the famous master of logic), and Parāsara Bhaṭṭa, the son of Kūrattāļvān, born in 1074 A.D. S'aṭakōpa's disciple, Viṣṇucitta, was the Ācārya of the famous Varadācārya whose lectures on the S'rī Bhāṣya in the hall of S'ri Varadarāja's temple at Kāñci formed the basis of S'udarsana Bhaṭṭa's standard gloss on the S'rī Bhāṣya called the S'rutaprakāsika.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> As instances of his love to humanity are cited the stories of his broadcasting the secret of the *mantra* imparted to him by the *guru* regardless of the torments of hell for transgressing the *guru's* injunction and of his allowing Adi Dṛāviḍas entry into the Melkōt temple on the day of the car festival. It is said Rāmānuja preferred suffering in hell if that would bring salvation to all.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A grantha in Sanskrit consists of 32 letters.

Varadācārva was popularly known as Nadādūr Ammāl and the hall where he delivered his lectures is still known as Ammāl's lecture hall. Parāsara Bhatta's disciple, Nañiīvar, wrote a commentary on the Tiruvāimoļi called the Nine Thousand. He popularised the study of the Divya Prabandha still further, and his disciple Periavaccan Pillai elaborated his lectures in a work known as the Twenty-Four Thousand. It was at this time that the schism in S'rī Vaisnavism became marked and gave rise to the schools of Tenkalai and Vadakalai. After Nampillai came Vadakku Tiruvīdipillai, who wrote a more elaborate commentary called the Thirty-Six Thousand and known as the Idu or the equal of the Tiruvāimoli, in its spiritual value. Pillailokācārya, the son of Vadakku Tiruvīdipillai, was the elder contemporary of Vedānta Desika, and is generally regarded as the first formulator of the Tenkalai school. He was born in 1264 A.D. He is called the younger Pillai to distinguish him from Nampillai who lived earlier; and he passed away in 1327 A.D. His spiritual descent is traced to Rāmānuja hierarchically through Periavāccān Pillai, Nampillai, Nañjīyar, Bhattar and Embār. When the Muhammadans sacked S'rīrangam and slaughtered the Vaisnavas and committed sacrilege in the temple, he took a leading part in removing the vigraha to a place of safety. He composed the eighteen Rahasyas or sacred manuals of Tenkalaism mostly in Manipravala or Sanskritised Tamil, of which the chief are the Artha Pañcaka and the Tatva Traya, dealing with the philosophic aspect, and the S'rī Vacana Bhūṣaṇa expounding the religious side. The Artha Pañcaka brings out the essentials of Visistādvaita in their fivefold aspect of (1) the nature of *Isvara*, (2) the jīva, (3) the purusārtha, (4) the upāya and (5) the virōdhī. Each is analysed into five forms with its own special features. Isvara exists as para, vyūha,

vibhava, antaryāmin and arca, of whom the last as the permanent incarnation of the grace of God is most accessible to the mumuksu. The jīva is classified into five kinds, namely, the nitya or ever free, the mukta or freed, the baddha or samsārin, the kevala enjoying kaivalya in a state of stranded spiritual solitude, and the mumuksu. The five chief ends of conduct are dharma or the performance of Vedic duties, artha or the acquisition of the economic goods of life, kāma or the enjoyment of the pleasures of life here and in Svarga, ātmānubhava or kaivalya and Bhagavadanubhava or the experience of Brahman. The five means of attaining Brahman are karma, jñāna, bhakti or salvation by selfeffort, prapatti or submission to the redemptive will of God and ācāryābhimāna or absolute loyalty to the guru as a living mediator between the mumuksu and the Lord. The obstacles are also fivefold, and they are traced tofaith in other gods, other means and ends than those prescribed for the mumuksu, the mistaken faith in svarūba jñāna as an end in itself, godlessness and the confusions relating toprapatti. The Tatva Traya is written in a terse aphoristic manipravāla style on the model of the Brahma Sūtras and consists of three parts, defining the nature of cit, acit and Isvara. Part I defines ātman and its jñāna, and explains the classification of ātman. Part II describes acit in its three aspects of kāla, suddha satva and misra tatva or prakrti evolving into the twenty-three categories including the psycho-physical factors of buddhi, manas and the indrivas and the cosmological elements of the five bhūtas and tanmātras. It is also known as avidyā or māyā. The third part is devoted to the understanding of Isvara including Hissvarūpa, rūpa and guņa. The S'rī Vacana Bhūṣana of the Acārya is also aphoristic. It consists of four chapters,

but is more popular on account of its main religious motive and value. The first chapter brings out the status of  $S'r\bar{\imath}$  in the salvation scheme as the divine mediatrix or purusakāra between the cetana and the Lord, with her unique qualities of ananyārhatva (of being His alone), pāratantrya or dependence on Him and krbā, as exemplified in Sītā's life. She joyfully submits herself to Isvara, as she has her being in Him and belongs to Him, and always intercedes on behalf of the sinner by pleading for his being forgiven. On the one hand, she subdues the retributive will of Isvara by the beauty of her enticing love and on the other, she melts the heart of the sinner by her infinite tenderness. The nature of the Lord as teacher, mediator and saviour in the unitarian way is revealed in the Bhagavad Gītā by the Lord Himself being ācārva, burusakāra and raksaka at the same time. It is the sinner mentality of the sinner that occasions the intervention of divine grace, and this grace is spontaneous and not conditioned by the effort of the self as in the case of the bhakta. Of the fivefold forms of divine mercy, para, that of Brahman in Vaikuntha, is remote like the rain drops in cloudland; vyūha is like the waters that encircle the cosmic egg; antaryāmin, the indwelling Lord, is like the spring in the earth which has to be discovered; vibhava or that of the avatārs is like the occasional freshes in a river which come and go; and it is only area that is the reservoir of divinity which remains after the incarnational flow passes away, and it is ever available to the cetana who thirsts for God. The Lord is Himself the upaya and the upeya, and the true meaning of prapatti is not winning the grace of God by self-effort but responding passively to its free flow. The second chapter dwells on the superiority of paragata svīkāra, in which the Lord seeks the sinner, over the svagata svīkāra, in

which the bhakta seeks the Lord. Grace is the free gift of God, and it flows spontaneously like mother's milk; if it is to be gained by effort, it resembles the artificial milk for the same baby, purchased in a milk depot or a chemist's shop. The volitional type, which stresses the need for self-effort, often promotes the feelings of self-esteem and self-righteousness, which stain the soul and have no intrinsic value. But justification by faith and self-surrender is the result of operative grace which is as stable as it is spontaneous. When man seeks God, even prapatti is futile; but if the Lord elects him, even his sinfulness is ignored, if not relished. Prabatti has its fruition in service to God and to the Bhāgavatas in a spirit of utter humility without the slightest trace of egoism. A Bhāgavata is known by his spiritual worth and not by his birth, and the conceit of birth is an impediment to devotion, and becomes a heresy when a Bhagavata of low birth is not duly respected. The third chapter assigns the highest value to mangalāsāsanam or benediction offered by the devotee, in his intense solicitude of love, to the Lord for His eternal reign of grace and to deep devotion due to tender affection, like that of Perialvar, who was so much drawn by the beauty of Bālakṛṣṇa that, in his God-intoxicated state, he forgot His isvaratva and with deep concern for the safety of the Divine child tended him with the affection of a fond parent. The fourth chapter prefers ācāryābhimāna to the grace of God for the main reason that, while the Lord is both just and merciful, the ācārya is moved only by mercy. The worship of the ācārya became in later days a main feature of some sects of Vaisnavism in Northern India also. The work then concludes with the statement that service to the ācārya and to the Bhāgavatas irrespective of their station in life is the highest and only means of attaining God. Pillailōkācārya was succeeded by

Maṇavāļa Mahāmunigaļ, who is revered by the *Tenkalais* as their greatest  $\overline{A}c\overline{a}rya$ . The chief contribution of *Tenkalaism* to the cause of  $S'r\bar{\imath}$  Vaiṣṇavism consists in its democratic dissemination to all people, of the truths of the darsana confined till then to the higher castes.

Three centuries after Rāmānuja, arose another great teacher of Visistādvaita, Vedānta Desika, who, by his unrivalled jñāna and vairāgya, established beyond doubt the teaching of Ubhaya Vedānta and spread the gospel of prapatti as a Vedāntic means to the attainment of Brahman. Venkatanātha, as he was named, was born in 1268 A.D. at Tūppil in Kāñci, which, in his own words,1 is the chief among the seven salvation-giving cities in this blessed land of Ind whose soil is so congenial to the sprouting of spirituality. The biography of prophets and saints is often a blending of supernatural, historical and mystical elements whose relevancy and value are determined by the reactions of the readers. Vedānta Desika is called Ghantāvatāra as he is said to be the incarnation of the bell of the shrine of S'rī S'rīnivāsa at Tirupati, through whom the Lord rings the glory of Hislove from the hill top and summons humanity to partake of it... Venkatanātha's spiritual descent is traced to Rāmānuja through a line of ācāryas—Appuļļār, Naḍādūr Ammāļ, Viṣṇucittar and Tirukkurukaippirānpillān. His prodigious intellect was a marvel even in his childhood; and one day, when, at the age of five, he followed his uncle Appullar to the temple of S'rī Varada where the great Nadadur Ammal was delivering a brilliant discourse on the Pancaratra, that great acarya was so much attracted by the beaming countenance of the bright boy that he missed the thread of his lecture, which was then

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> muttitarum nagar ezbil mukkiamām kacci.

supplied by the precocious lad. Under the guidance of his uncle, Ātreya Rāmānuja familiarly known as Appullār. he easily acquired, even at the age of twenty, perfect knowledge in all the then available secular and spiritual literature, including the arts, the sciences, the several darsanas, the various agamas, Smrtis, Vedas, Vedanta, and the Prabandhas, a mastery which led later on to the title of "Sarva Tantra Systantra" or the master of all arts and sciences, being divinely bestowed on him at S'rīrangam. In addition to his encyclopaedic knowledge, he had intuitive intimations of the divine nature or Brahmānubhava. He was married to Kanakavalli who proved to be a worthy companion in his Vedāntic mission, and together they led an exemplary life, he living for God only and she for God in him. When Appullar's end was near, he blessed Desika and exhorted him to spread the ideals of Visistādvaita and to carry on the great tradition. Venkatanatha went to Tiruvahindrapuram, a holy place in the South Arcot District, and, on the pretty hill overlooking the river Garuda, he chose a pipul tree for vogic meditation, first on Garuda, the embodiment of the Vedas, and then on Hayagrīva, the Lord of Wisdom. He was soon blessed with a vision of Hayagrīva who conferred on him the power to spread the Visistādvaita system in the interests of world-welfare. He composed several stotras in Sanskrit like the Havagrīva Stotra, and the well-known lyric the Mahāvīra Vaibhava and also a Prākṛta poem Accutas atakam; and his Gopāla Vims ati, a hymn of twenty stanzas on Göpāla or the cowherd Kṛṣṇa, is written in the sweetest strains of Sanskrit melody. The opponents of the system representing seventeen doctrines and sects were overthrown by him in a controversy started by them, and the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Vims'atyābde visruta nānāvidha vidyaḥ

arguments advanced during the debate were then summarised by him in a Sanskrit-Tamil polemic work called the Paramata Bhangam. With his logical subtlety, metaphysical profundity, poetic genius, unrivalled debating skill and devotional earnestness, he was able to defeat his rivals and make them his disciples. Owing to his rare mastery of poetics and dialectics and the art of disputation, he won the title of "Kavi Tārkika Simha" (the lion of poets and logicians). He then returned to Kāñci, composed many more stōtras and Prabandhas, including the Varadarāja Pañcāsat, in praise of S'rī Varada, his favourite deity, who accepted his prapatti, as shown by his works, Nyāsa Dasaka and the Adaikkalappattu.¹

An important event in one's life in those days was the pilgrimage that one undertook to holy places in Northern India. including Benares and Brndavan via Tirupati. In his Daya S'ataka, composed at Tirupati, he praises the redemptive grace of S'rīnivasa as the permanent incarnation of Brahman and as the Lord of creation who is ruled by His davā or grace. In this incarnation of Divinity, redemptive love dominates over omnipotence and transfigures it into almighty mercy. On his return to Kāñci after seven years of pilgrimage, he wrote his famous reply to his old friend, Vidyāranya, the minister of Bukkarāya, the king of Vijayanagar, who had invited him to the court to receive royal favour. The reply consists of five stanzas called the Vairāgya Pañcaka and is a classical expression of his vairāgya. He said that the grains gleaned in the harvest field, a handful of water from a tank and a tattered loin cloth were enough for the body and that, rich with the possession of the heavenly treasure at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Attigiri Aruļāļarku adaikkalam nān pukundene.

Hastigiri (Kāñci), he had no need for earthly treasures. The story is told of how he rejected and threw away gold pieces that were one day concealed by well-intentioned benefactors in the doles of rice given to him in his daily rounds of uñcavrtti or alms-taking. When he was fifty years old he accepted an invitation from the Vaisnavite leaders of S'rīrangam to defend the darsana against the charges made by some eminent Advaitins from the north. The opponents were vanquished in a seven days' controversy and converted to the faith. The arguments used in the debate were summarised by his disciples in the well-known work called S'ata Dūṣaṇī, and the title "Ubhaya Vedāntācārya" was then divinely conferred on him. It was in S'rīrangam that he wrote his chief philosophical works and rahasyas. In 1310, Malik Kaffur, the general of Allauddin, sacked Madura and later on the Mohamedans invaded S'rīrangam and massacred thousands of S'rī Vaisnavas in the latter place, including Sudarsana Bhatta, the author of S'ruta standard gloss on the S'rī Bhāsya. Prakāsikā the Vedānta Desika, however, saved the gloss by burying it in the ground and also took charge of Sudarsana Bhatta's two sons who were entrusted to him during that reign of terror. He then retired to Satyamangalam (now part of the Coimbatore District) in Mysore, as Rāmānuja had done, and later returned with joy when he heard of the restoration of the shrine of S'rīrangam and the re-installation of the image of the Lord. He then composed the allegorical drama called the Sankalba Sūryōdaya in ten acts, which has more divinity in it than the divine comedy of Dante, as a rejoinder to the Advaitic work of Krsna Misra known as the Prabodha Candrodaya. His Hamsa Sandesa is on the lines of Kālidāsa's Megha Dūta, but it improves on the poet's

work, as it employs poetry in the service of religion. The  $P\bar{a}duk\bar{a}$  Sahasram is said to have been composed as a hymn on the sandals of S'rī Raṅganātha in three hours during one night, to justify the title of Kavi Tārkika Simha which was demurred to by his opponents. He wrote more than forty works in S'rīraṅgam and lived for the full span of one hundred years and one more.

His life has a more inspiring influence than even his learning, and, though uncompromising as a critic and controversialist, he was absolutely austere and humble in his daily life, and bore meekly many a trial and tribulation returning love for hatred. His chief characteristics were his profound appreciation of the 'vision and faculty divine' revealed in Rāmānuja's teaching, his sturdy hatred of dependence on others, his utter contempt for money and position, his deep devotion to God as S'rīman Nārāyaṇa and his anxiety to use his rare logical gifts purely in the service of religion. He had often to conduct disputations but these were always with those who did not accept Rāmānuja's teachings, and he undertook the task in defence of the darsana and not for personal triumph. This is clear from his own retrospect of his life given in the closing verses of his Rahasyatraya Sāra.

nirvişṭam yatisārvabhaumavacasāmāvṛttibhiryauvanam nirdhūtetarapāratantryanirayā nītāssukham vāsarāḥ l aṅgīkṛtya satām prasattimasatām garvōpi nirvāpitāḥ seṣāyuṣyapi seṣidampatidayā dīkṣā mudīkṣāmahe ll

Thus he spent his time in devotional service to God and godly men and in the spread of the gospel of *prapatti* to all. He had twelve disciples to carry on his work. Among them, the chief were his son Varadācārya and the sannyāsin

Brahmatantrasvatantra. He passed away in the year 1369 full of age and honours.

His main contribution to Visistādvaita was the further elucidation of the Visistādvaitic teachings of Rāmānuja by establishing by Vedantic methods the truths of Ubhaya Vedanta and the supreme value of prapatti. With his synthetic genius, he sought the co-ordination of the different facets of his encyclopaedic knowledge, by the central idea of Brahman as the s'arīrin or Self of all. As an acute logician and metaphysician, he pointed out the essentials of scriptural knowledge in his Rahasyatrayasāra and explained the Upaniṣad in terms of the Divya Prabandha and the Divya Prabandha in terms of the Upanisads. He thus co-ordinated the teachings of the rsis and the Alvars. He was a synoptic thinker with a long-range view of life as well as a vision of reality. As a conservative revolutionary, he bridged the gulf between bhakti and prapatti by reconciling the moral and social needs of karma and the religious needs of krbā. He harmonised the paternal idea of the Fatherhood of God and rulership with the maternal instinct of tenderness, in the idea of Nārāyana and S'rī. Truth is true for ever and uncompromising, but when it is transfigured by love, it mediates between extremes, links thought and action and becomes a unifying power. Truth is based on non-contradiction and is expressed by 'either-or-'; but love is based on harmony, and is expressed by 'both-and-'. Vedānta Desika was a metaphysician as well as a bhakta, and though he spoke and wrote as a rigorous logician, he acted as a true bhakta in whom dayā was more dominant than dialectic display. His daily life was a model of saintly purity and simplicity.

In the light of this critical estimate of his work and worth, his philosophic exposition may be briefly summarised under the headings of epistemology, metaphysics, ethics. aesthetics and religion. The merit of his logic and epistemology consists in reconstructing the Nyāya Vaisesika system in the light of Visistādvaita by simplifying the categories and including among the bramanas the teachings of the Alvars by extolling them with the name Dramidopanisad. The Nyāya Parisuddhi expounds the nature of the three main pramanas and proves the authority of the Pañcarātra. His Sesvara Mīmāmsa is a reconstruction of Jaimini's Pūrva Mimāmsa by integrating the two Mimamsas and controverting the atheistic interpretation of the former. His metaphysics has a negative and a positive side. On the negative side, it is a refutation of rival systems. In his Tamil work, Paramata Bhanga, he gives a brief summary of the doctrines of the prevailing philosophical systems, somewhat on the lines of the Sarva Dars'ana Sangraha of Madhvācārva, and refutes them in the light of Visistādvaita. But it is his S'ata Dūsani that brings out his dialectical genius in repudiating Māvāvāda on the lines of Rāmānuja's criticism known as the saptavidhānubabatti and also in criticising the two schools of Bhedābheda. The Vādi Traya Khandana is a shorter work following the same lines of criticism. The constructive side of his contribution is brought out in the following philosophical works. Tatva Muktā Kalāpa is a Visistādvaita exposition of the nature of jada or acit, jīva or cit, mukti, adravya, buddhi and Isvara. Sarvārtha Siddhi is a more detailed exposition of the same truths. Nyāya Siddhāñjana consists of six sections dealing with the same problems of jada, jīva, Īsvara, mukti, buddhi and adravya. His commentaries on Isavāsyopanişad and Bhagavad Gītā controvert the Advaitic theory of ajñāna

and akarma and defend the view that Brahman is saguna and not nirguna and that karma is transfigured into kainkarva. Desika's Vedāntic ethics insists on the performance of the imperatives of duty as divine commands according to each man's station in life, which is determined by his karma and guna. In his Vairāgva Pañcaka, Vedānta Desika shows that man cannot worship God and mammon at the same time and that the divine treasure is infinitely more valuable than the pleasures that earthly wealth can provide. His poetic genius lay in his synthesis of literature and religion by furnishing a divine background to epic, lyric, and dramatic poetry. This is recognised by the great philosopher, Appayya Dīksitar, who commented on Desika's epic, Yādavābhyudaya, in the course of which he pays a glowing tribute to the poetic genius of Desika. His aesthetic philosophy defines Brahman as the beautiful and blissful, and prefers bhakti to the rasas extolled by mere aesthetics. In his Sankalba Sūrvodaya, the author combats the Advaitic conclusion of Krsna Misra, by preferring the solar light of divine grace to the moony effulgence of ātmajñāna. It is an allegorical drama in ten Acts representing the conflict in the jīva between the forces of Viveka and Mahāmōha helped by Kāma, Krōdha. Darba and Dambha. Viveka subdues the evils of raga and dvesa and is reinforced by vairāgya and tatva jñāna led The hero is Viveka and Sumati is his by Visnubhakti. queen and their plan is to free the Purusa from the hazards of karma and to enable him to attain mukti. Act I begins the play by showing the seductive charms of Kāma and his plan of enticing Purusa, which is to be frustrated by Viveka. Act II presents the teachings of Rāmānuja by the refutation of rival systems and the steadying effect of this on Viveka. Acts III and IV delineate the evil

influence of raga and dvesa on Purusa. Act V describes the power philosophy of pride and vanity and reveals the author's accurate knowledge of human psychology. Acts VI and VII describe the aerial travel of Viveka to all the important religious centres of India with a view to discovering a congenial place for meditation on the Lord and concludes that the purified heart is the best place for focussing the will on the beauteous form of the Lord and for conquering the foes of the spirit. Act VIII describes the battle between Viveka and Mahāmoha and the final victory of Viveka. In the last two Acts, Purusa, freed from the evils of moha, enters on the practice of introversion or samādhi, and, aided by Visnubhakti. he surrenders himself to the Lord and attains s'anti, on the solar awakening of divine sankalpa or grace. With the dawn of His redemptive will, the darkness of moha is dispelled for ever.

Vedānta Desika expounds the essentials of Visiṣṭādvaita in a popular way in his masterpiece called the Rahasyatraya Sāra, in which he follows the Sūtra method of developing the whole theme in terms of tatva, hita and puruṣārtha. The supreme tatva is S'rīman Nārāyaṇa as the sarīrin or the Self of the jīva, being its adhāra or support, niyantā or controller, seṣī or possessor and svāmī or master. He is Himself the upāya and the upeya. The sādhya upāya or means of attainment is bhakti or its alternative prapatti The siddhōpāya is the free causality of God Himself. He thus emphasises that, though the prime cause of salvation is the grace of God who is the siddha upāya, the aspirant has to deserve it at least by seeking it or asking for it. The mother's milk flows freely no doubt, but it does not do so unless the child applies its mouth to the teat. This sādhya upāya

determines the nature of the recipients of the grace of the Lord, who is not an arbitrary or capricious ruler. The treatise also describes the life of the prapanna and his integral experience of Brahman in Vaikuntha in the state of sāyujya. This is also beautifully brought out in his Paramapada Sōpāna, in which he constructs a spiritual ladder, as it were, from worldliness to Vaikuntha. In this pathway to the headquarters of Reality, the main mile-stones are the metaphysical knowledge of Brahman arrived at by viveka, the moral progress of the pilgrim through vairāgya, the religious striving by bhakti or prapatti and the mystic ascent to the home in the Absolute.

After Pillailokācārya and Vedānta Desika, the split between the Tenkalai and Vadakalai schools became more pronounced. While the latter tradition was carried on by Varadācārya, Brahmatantrasvatantra and their disciples, the Tenkalai position was definitely consolidated and established by Manavala Mahamunigal (1370—1443 A.D.) This wellknown leader of the Tenkalai school was born near Ālvār Tirunagari in Tinnevelly. He was the son of Tötādri, a devotee of Lord Ranganatha, and is believed by his followers to have been a re-incarnation of Rāmānuja. He soon acquired proficiency in the tenets of Visistādvaita and was initiated into the essentials of the Tiruvāimoli by a famous teacher S'rī S'aila or Tiruvāimoļipiļļai by name. He settled down at S'rīrangam and spent his time in consecrated service to the Lord and the co-ordination of worship in the Vaisnava shrines by organising the work of his disciples in different sees or centres of sampradāya or tradition. His devotion to Rāmānuja is well brought out in his work known as the Yatirāja Vimsati, and he is therefore called "Yatındra Prayana." He entered the sannyasa order and spent his days in devotion to S'rī Ranganātha and the exposition of the Prabandha. To popularise the teachings of Pillailokācārya, he wrote commentaries in a lucid style on Tatva Traya, S'rī Vacana Bhūsana and Ācārya Hrdava and also on Tiruvāimoli. He also composed a work called Ubades'a Ratnamālā which contains the main teachings of the  $\overline{A}lv\overline{a}rs$ . The chief disciples of the  $\overline{A}c\overline{a}rva$  were called the "Asta Diggajas" or the eight elephants guarding the eight quarters of the land and spreading the gospel of grace to all persons. One of them is stated to be Prativadi Bhayankara, who wrote the Saptati Ratnamālika in praise of Vedānta Desika. The split between the Vadakalai and the Tenkalai schools widened in course of time and the pātrams or laudatory verses recited in temple-worship to-day in praise of the leading ācārvas are a signal for sectarian strife though there is no intrinsic cause for dissension.

There are eighteen points of difference between the schools, which are mostly doctrinal, and they may be grouped under the principles relating to tatva, hita and puruṣārtha. Among the epistemological ways of knowing Brahman, Vedānta Desika insists on the integrity of Ubhaya Vedānta and the equal validity and value of the religious authority of the rṣis and the Alvārs; but the Tenkalai school stresses the value of the Tamil Prabandha on account of its pure sātvika and Vaiṣṇava character. The Vedāntic view of the entry of the

¹ They are summarised in the following verse:—
bbedās svāmikṛpāphalānyagatiṣu srīvyāptyupāyatvayōḥ
tadvātsalyadayāniruktivacasām nyāsē ca tatkartari l
dharmatyāgavirōdhayōs svavihite nyasāṅgahētutvayōḥ
prāyas'cittavidhau tadīyabhajane nuvvāpti kaivalyayōh ll

infinite into the finite is interpreted by the former school as co-existence and by the latter as pervasion. But the main point of controversy relates to the nature of Laksmi. The Vadakalai school, recognising the equal religious value of justice and mercy, regards S'rī as infinite or vibhu and defines the divine nature as non-dual ontologically and dual functionally. Isvara and Isvari are two in one and one in two like the flower and its fragrance, and no mathematical explanation is adequate or relevant in dealing with their transcendental unity. Laksmī is akāra (अ) or Īsvara and not makāra (म) or jīva, and her redemptive mercy is omnipotent; the mithuna or unity of the Lord and S'rī is vital to the mumuksu. The Tenkalai is more monotheistic when he denies the dual nature of the infinite and relegates Laksmi to the level of a iīva. Whatever the ontological status of Laksmī, there is no doubt that both the schools insist on Her  $krb\bar{a}$  as essential to mukti. As divine mediatrix, she intervenes between the sinner and the Holy and transforms the former into a mukta and the latter into the Saviour. As regards the nature of the hita, or summum bonum, the Vadakalai recognises the superiority of bhakti and brabatti to karma and jñāna and insists on the equal validity of bhakti and prapatti as means to mukti. But he prefers the latter on account of its ease, immediacy, naturalness and universality. Prapatti is the act of casting oneself on the mercy of God with the guidance of the guru and craving for mercy, and is not born of conceit. With a view to reconciling the opposition between karma and krpā and to avoiding the charge of attributing cruelty and caprice to Isvara, the Vadakalai insists on the need for deserving the grace of God before desiring it and formulates the theory of vyāja and ākiñcinya or consciousness of unworthiness as an occasion for redemption and restoration. The human will is there, we know not how; but it is made to subserve God's will as it belongs to Him and has paradhina kartriva and not svatantra kartrtva. But the Tenkalai rejects this view as savouring of egoism and emphasises the absoluteness and unconditioned nature of God's grace (nirhetuka katākṣa). To him responsiveness to the grace of God has more appeal than the idea of human initiative and responsibility. "Whom He chooses, unto him He reveals Himself." and bhakti is itself only the consequence of antecedent grace. Karma, jñāna and bhakti have independent values determined by the nature of the aspirant or adhikārī. While the Vadakalai defines the effect of vātsalva in the divine nature as the removal of dosa and cleansing the soul of its soilure, the Tenkalai thinks that vātsalya connotes also delight in dosa. It is the nature of forgiveness to welcome the sinner and not to penalise him for his wrong-doing. To the Vadakalai, dayā is realised only in the removal of another's suffering; but to the Tenkalai it is para duhke duhkitvam entering into the sorrows of manand even the relish of evil as physical evil. On the social side, the Vadakalai insists on the performance of svadharma or the duties relating to one's station in life even in the stage after prapatti, as kainkarya and in conformity to the divine command; but the Tenkalai feels that the acts of the prapanna are amoral and should not be judged by the moral standards applicable to the ordinary men following the rules of varnāsrama, and the question of moral laxity, condemnation or condonation does not arise in his case. This problem closely resembles that relating to the conduct of the jivanmukta as amoral in the sense of fulfilling the moral law or amoral as a law unto itself. While there is a view amongst some Tenkalais that makes Nammalvar a nitya samsarin with a view to extolling the absolute krpa and the need for atonement and acceptance, the Vaḍakalai traces the castes of the Āļvārs to the incarnational requirements of the Rakṣaka and not to their karma. The controversy on puruṣārtha hinges on the status of the kaivalyārthī. While the Vaḍakalai contends that he is on the path to perfection or Paramapada, the Tenkalai assigns to him a place in Paramapada itself, but segregates him from the society of the nitya sūris.

From the philosophical standpoint, as contrasted with the doctrinal teachings of dogmatics, these distinctions are, on the whole, negligible. In Hinduism which is a view as also a way of life, philosophical differences enter into and affect the minutest details of life and sometimes make for sectarian disputes and accentuate social exclusiveness. This influence is felt even in the siddhanta or theology of Advaita, though its theory of the Absolute admits of degrees of truth, goodness and beauty and is all-accommodating and tolerant. Visistādvaita, as a philosophy of mystic love, is deeply interested in synthesis and harmony without destroying individuality and works for universal salvation. But, as Vaisnavite theology and ritual, it is constrained, in the interests of logical truth and ethical discrimination, to follow the method of 'either—or—' and develop its own dogmas and ceremonials and build up Vaisnavite institutions somewhat on the lines of the Christian church and the group feeling of Islām. Every system has itsown sambradāya or tradition which tends to divide its followers into warring sects, when the logical intellect aided by the passion for external observances takes the place of spiritual spontaneity and when law supersedes love. Institutional religion often grows by alliance with secular power, compromises with it, and is finally enslaved by it. These influences can be traced also in the history of modern S'rī Vaiṣnavism, Its tendency to profitless logomachy and degrading litigancy are blots on the fair name of the whole dars'ana. The historian philosopher who takes a long-range view of Vaiṣnavism and discerns its inner meaning and value knows from history that while the increase of sects is inevitable, sectarianism is undesirable.

Philosophically interpreted, the differences between the schools are not fundamental, but refer to matters of opinion.1 In finding out the heart of Vaisnavism, the works of the Tenkalai school which are mostly in Tamil are complementary to those of the Vadakalais and Vedanta Desika is claimed by both the schools in their Vedāntic aspect as the defender of Vaisnavism regarded as Visistādvaita darsana. The eighteen points of difference can be reduced to the single problem of krbā vs. karma in its aspect of the practice of upāya, just as the doctrinal differences in post-Sankara Advaita may be traced to the critical study of the relation between jñāna and avidyā. The problem resembles the Christian question, whether salvation is justification by works or by faith. is sometimes stated, in the language of William James, as the rivalry between the volitional type of saintliness and the selfsurrender type, but the points of difference in the analogy are more essential than those of agreement. The idea of original sin and vicarious atonement in a miraculous way by the only begotten Son of God is foreign to the ethical religion of S'rī Vaisnavism. The theory of grace as a supernatural infusion without a spiritual transformation and regeneration creates an unbridgeable gulf between the natural and the supernatural.

<sup>&#</sup>x27; cf. Vedānta Des'ika in his Sampradāya Parisuddhi.

S'rī Bhāṣyakārarudaīya s'iṣyasampradāyaṅgalil onrilum arthavirōdham illai. vākyayōjanābhedame ulladu.

between the moral and the religious consciousness. If salvation is by antecedent merit, and justification by works, it is said to be moralistic and ritualistic and to involve more faith in the inexorability of the moral law of karma than in the escapability arising from divine grace. If salvation is by faith and antecedent grace and guarantees the remission of sin without any condition like remorse, it is said to favour the faith in election and pre-determination and the idea of divine arbitrariness which might lead to the toleration of moral laxity and chaos. Vedānta Desika's view of vyāja is rooted in the assurance of ethical religion, that Bhagavān is Himself the upāya and the ubeva, and the true meaning of human responsibility consists in our responsiveness to the call of krpā. It is the first principle of redemptive religion that, while the holiness of God drives us away from Him, His mercy enters into culpable humanity and draws us to Him. Even the appearance of a contrite heart and the feeling of unworthiness shown in an infinitesimal degree evokes sympathy and elicits the infinite grace of the Rakṣaka. This view is the meeting of the extremes of salvation by merit and salvation by mercy, and the infinity of davā works through the infinitesimal condition of contrition. It is the recognition of the fact that endeavour consists in recognising the futility of endeavour. This view preserves the idea of divine justice and provides for the domination of divine grace which is its fruition, and if there is any difference between the two schools, it is in the starting point and not in the goal. It is in the emphasis of aspects and not in the choice of opposing theories. The relation between righteousness and redemption in the working of God in human history is a holy mystery which is more worthy of reverential study than the mere philosophy of the mystery of the relation between Brahman and avidyā in Advaita. If the rope-snake

riddle typifies the riddle of the universe, the karma-kṛpā problem is the mystery of religious experience, which is more relevant to the mumuksu than the logical puzzle and cannot be lightly dismissed as a theological dogma meant for the ignorant. The vexed question cannot be solved logically or ethically. can be dissolved only by the direct intuition of God. The point whether katāksa is sahetuka or nirhetuka arising from merit or arising even when there is no merit (gratia co-operans or gratia operans) is raised in terms of the causal category, which is not so adequate as the organic or mystic conception of the sarīrasarīrin relation. When bhakti or prapatti is intense and irrepressible, the soul hungers for God, its sarīrin, and God also hungers for the soul as its ātman and this reciprocity of love ends in the irresistibility of the bliss of communion. In this rapport, the logical intellect is merged in alogical ecstasy and is indistinguishable from it. If this is the experience of the Alvars as expounded by the acaryas, the distinction between the two schools regarding the working of  $kr b\bar{a}$  is a distinction without much difference.

## CHAPTER XXI

## THE INFLUENCE OF RAMANUJA ON OTHER SYSTEMS IN INDIA

THE catholicity of Visiṣṭādvaita as a philosophy of religion lies in its synthetic insight into truth and the spiritual transformation of such insight into all-pervasive or universal love. It is borne out by the following oft-quoted authoritative statements contained in the Veda and the Gita and the utterances of Nammalvar and Ramanuja. Says the Rg Veda: "Sat is one though the seers describe it in different ways." 1 Thus the Gītā: "Even those who worship other divinities, in love and faith, worship myself, Kaunteya, but they do so in an informal manner," 2 "Like the rain-fed rivers that flow into the ocean, the worship offered to all Devas or deities finally reaches Kesava." 3 Nammālvār says: "The hymns uttered in praise of your chosen gods are really addressed to my Tirumāl or Paramātma". Rāmānuja's synthetic method consists in his conclusion that all ideas and names ultimately connote Brahman or Nārāyana, that the worship of deities like Indra is really the worship of Nārāyaņa, the Inner Ruler of all

<sup>1</sup> ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti.

² ye tvanya devatā bhaktāḥ yajante s'raddhayānvitaḥ l tepi māmeva kaunteya yajantyavidhipūrvakam ll—B. G., IX. 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> ākās'āt patitam tōyam yathā gaccati sāgaram l sarvadevanamaskāraḥ kes'avam prati gaccati ll

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> num in kavi kondu num num ittā deivam ettināl cemmin cudarmudi en tirumālukkuccerume.—*Tiru.*, III. ix. 6.

beings, and that in the light of this truth the essential points in the Sānkhva, the Veda and the Pāsupata doctrines are to be adopted.1 The terms sarva sarīrin, sarva s'abdavācya and sarva rakşaka refer only to Brahman or Nārāyaṇa. In the centuries that have followed the age of Rāmānuja, Hinduism has been threatened with extinction by the attacks of proselytising religions like Islam and Christianity and it has on the whole successfully resisted these attacks by its innate synthetic genius. In critical times in the Afghan, the Mughal and the British periods, prophets and saints arose in different parts of the country to meet the onslaughts of these hostile religions and the history of Vaisnavism, especially in Northern India. marks the different stages of its development based on the needs of the situation; but in many cases the new movements had their ultimate origin in the teachings of Rāmānuja as interpreted liberally rather than literally. Reformers like Rāmānanda, Caitanya, and Rāmdās came to fulfil the past and not to destroy it and even revolutionary movements like those that arose in Bengal and the Punjab have felt the assimilative power of ancient Hinduism. More than all, even alien faiths that came to conquer institutionally have been conquered in a mystic way by the silent power of love as exemplified in the lives of Indian Sufis and Christian mystics. The vitality of the Vaisnavite and the Vaisnavising movements is largely traceable to the influence of Rāmānuja who himself represents the ancient tradition of Vedāntic hospitality and love. Though this chapter is not strictly a part of the whole work, its main object is to bring out the vitality of S'rī Vaisnavism as a living religion and its claim to be a world religion based on universality as opposed to uniformity. It is essentially a religion of satvic love based on sastraic authority and spiritual

<sup>1</sup> Srī Bhāṣya, II. ii. 43.

experience and, if the other religions satisfy the test of spirituality, they are, pragmatically speaking, allied to it.

The bhakti movement in Northern India is traceable to the influence of Rāmānanda. By its stress on monotheistic faith in one God and the establishment of spiritual brotherhood, it accepted the challenge of Islam in the Muhammadan period, made Hindustan safe for Hinduism, and saved it from disintegration and destruction. The monotheism of Rāmānanda exerted a great influence also on the offshoots of Hinduism like Sikhism and Brahmoism and even on Sufism. and marked the focussing point of the varieties of Vaisnavite experience in Northern India. Rāmānanda (1300—1411) was deeply influenced by the teaching of Rāmānuja and was initiated into the truths of Visistādvaita; but he was a radical reformer and did not recognise caste distinctions in religion. He vitalised religion by freeing it from religiosity, and spread the universal gospel of bhakti. He is thus regarded as the fountainhead of the bhakti movement in Northern India. Brahman is. according to him, the One without a second, and is immanent in the hearts of all sentient beings. Rāma is Brahman, and there is no other God but Rāma. Rāma was the incarnation of dharma or was righteousness itself, and is adored as the pattern of perfection in politics, conjugal life and religion, in their highest aspects of monarchy, monogamy and monotheism. Monarchy is government by a wise ruler who has the righteousness of God; monogamy insists on absolute conjugal fidelity in thought, word and deed; and monotheism is faith in the universal Redeemer; and history does not afford a better example of a just ruler, loyal husband and merciful Lord than Rāma. The ethical religion of Rāma has therefore a universal appeal.

Religion is the spiritual realisation of God by every person, irrespective of social distinctions. The twelve disciples of Rāmānanda, who, like the twelve apostles of Jesus, ardently spread the faith by their life and teachings in the mother-tongue, came from all classes of society. especially from the depressed classes, and Kabīr and Tulsidās were among the chief of them. Ravidas, a cobbler by birth. is said to have initiated Mīrā Bāi into the meaning of bhakti. and insisted on the need for democratising bhakti by service to all. S'ena, a barber, made the Rāja of Bandogārh a disciple of Vaisnavism. Dana (1415) was a Jat and Pipa (1425) was a Rājput prince. S'ukānanda, Asānanda, Paramānanda, Mehānanda and S'rī Ananda also belonged to the order of Rāmānuja. Kabīr, born in 1398, is regarded as the greatest of Rāmānanda's disciples. He is said to be the son of a Brahmin widow brought up by a Muhammadan weaver. The story is told that Kabīr resorted to a device to deserve the grace of Rāmānanda, by laying himself on the Ganges Ghat in the guru's path in the darkness of an early morning. When Rāmānanda touched the head of Kabīr, he cried "Rāma, Rāma," and Kabīr felt that it was the mantra given to him by the guru for meditation. He insisted on monotheistic devotion touched with morality, cared more for inner purity than for caste rigour and idolatry, and did his best to unite Islam and Hinduism by synthesising their Vedāntic and Sūfi aspects. Dādu (1544—1603), a cotton cleaner at Ahmedabad, believed more in God-realisation than in blind faith in scripture. He had interviews with Akbar with a view to bringing together divergent faiths in a common bond of love. Sūri Dās, blind from his birth, dedicated his poetic talents to the service of S'rī Krsna. Tulsidās (1532) was a Brahmin who had a genius for Rāma bhakti, and composed his immortal Hindi Rāmāyaṇa which is so highly valued in Hindustan for its moving power. But he was more conservative than Kabīr and Dādu.

The philosophy of Nimbārka called Dvaita-Advaita or the Sanatkumāra sampradāya seems to stand midway between the school of Yadava and Visistadvaita and is a system of Vaisnavism. Nimbārka's commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras is known as the Vedānta Pārijāta Saurabha. Reality is, according to Nimbarka, an identity that pervades difference and gives meaning to it. Bare identity is as unthinkable as bare difference. Negation denies only bare difference, but not otherness. Dvaita-Advaita may appear paradoxical, but is not self-contradictory, and it does equal justice to both the aspects of Dvaita and Advaita. Brahman exists in itself in its abheda aspect as the saguna or the self-determined and enters into the world in a bhedābheda relation in terms of distinction as well as dependence. The cosmic order is the self-actualisation of the creative potency or sakti that is in Brahman. The creative urge or parinama s'akti that is at the heart of Reality is potential in pralaya and actualised in systi. Reality is the unity in trinity consisting of the jīva or bhoktā, the subject of experience, the bhogya or object of experience, and Isvara, the inner Ruler of both. Creation and dissolution resemble the closing and the disclosing of a part of the body of a serpent. Like the spider spinning its cobweb out of itself, Brahman emanates into the universe of space and time, but exceeds their content. The jīva is an amsa or element of the absolute like the sea and its waves, or the radiant sun and its radiance, and not a fictitious phantom like the reflec-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A Telugu Brahmin who lived in the twelfth century A.D. after Rāmānuja and before S'rīkantha.

tion of the sun in water. It is different from Brahman and is. also identical with it. Brahman exists in and as the jīva, but is not tainted by its imperfections. The absolute exists in and as the particular. Owing to the sense of finitude, the iīva suffers from the hazards of the divided consciousness and the ills of metempsychosis. The mumuksu as an upāsaka contemplates on Brahman as the All-Self and surrenders himself to His grace. The freed self or prapanna emerges from the body when it is dissolved by death, soars to the world of Brahman through the shining paths of the gods, and attains the bliss of Brahman. Mukti is not svarūpa aīkya or identity with Brahman or ekībhāva or unity-consciousness, but is the realisation of the Dvaita-Advaita relation between the jīva and Brahman. The chief value of Nimbarka Vedanta consists in its being a logical transition from the Yadava school to Visistādvaita. It is the latter system alone that removes the fatal defects of Brahma Parināmavāda by predicating imperfections to the jīva and mutability to acit.

The philosophy of Rāmānuja is a logical transition from Dvaita-Advaita to Visiṣṭādvaita; the teaching of Pūrṇaprajña or Madhvācārya marks an important epoch in the history of Vaiṣṇavism, and is a change from Visiṣṭādvaita to Dvaita darsana. Madhvācārya, the first systematic exponent of the Dvaita school of Vedānta, was born near Udipi in 1199 A.D. Even as a boy, he, like the other great ācāryas, showed his extraordinary ability in mastering the various branches of knowledge and metaphysical understanding. Initiated into the sannyāsa order early in life, under the name of Ānanda Tīrtha, he felt it his mission in life to give a new and correct interpretation of the Vedānta Sūtras, different from that of other schools, traversed the whole country converting many

thinkers to his view and popularising his philosophy, finally went to Badrināth and there passed away. He wrote commentaries on the Rg Veda, the Upanisads, the Gītā and the Brahma Sūtras in the light of the Dvaita system, expounded the essentials of the Mahā Bhārata and the Bhāgavata, and rigorously maintained the view that the prasthanas are a single integral whole. With a view to bringing out fully the fundamentals of Dvaita Vedānta by a refutation of other schools, notably of Māyāvāda, he composed independent treatises called the Dasa Prakaranas. His work was carried on by his followers, the chief among them being Jaya Tīrtha, a contemporary of Vidyāraņya and Vedānta Desika, and later on by Vyāsarāya. The philosophy of Dvaita has a negative as well as a positive side, and is both speculative and spiritual. On the negative side, it joins issue with Advaita and rejects its theories of nirguna Brahman, Māyāvāda and the identity philosophy, and regards the Advaitins as Buddhists in disguise. It also rejects Rāmānuja's theory of aprthaksiddha visesana, and denies the view that Brahman is the upādānakārana of the universe, on the ground that, if He becomes the universe, He ceases to be free and perfect. On the positive side, it insists on the truth that reality is rooted in difference, and establishes the Vedāntic philosophy of theism. Its theory of epistemology is a development of the realistic position that knowledge is savisesana or determinate and not nirvisesana or indeterminate, and is an external relation between the visayī and the visaya or the subject and the object. It thus avoids the defects of mentalism, materialism and relativism. Truth is based on correspondence and not on non-contradiction, and therefore there are no degrees of truth and error. The three sources of valid knowledge are pratyaksa, anumana and agama and the three other pramanas recognised by Advaita, namely, upamāna, arthāpatti and anupalabdhi are included in these and are therefore not independent. Pratyakṣa is the basis of knowledge, and is not sublatable or of secondary value; and as knowledge is always saviseṣana, the distinction between what is savikalpaka and nirvikalpaka as recognised by S'aṅkara and Rāmānuja does not hold good. When knowledge presents the object as it is and all its instruments function normally, it is true or yathārtha, but abnormal cases arising from psycho-physical disorders and karma, are sources of error. In all cases, the reality of the world order is presupposed and is never disputed. The Veda is impersonal, infallible and eternal, and has to be accepted by the āstika or rejected in toto as is done by the nāstika; but the theory of relative truth as expounded by Advaita leads to no truth at all and thus ends in scepticism.

Epistemology, as the enquiry into the pramanas, is essential to the ontological exposition of tatva or prameva as revealed by the pramana. The theory of visesa is the basic truth of Dvaitavada and it refers to the uniqueness or peculiar particularity of all beings and their attributes. There is fivefold difference or pancabheda, namely, the difference between Brahman and the jīva, Brahman and jada, jīva and jīva, jīva and jada and jada and jada. Brahman exists by Himself and. is independent, and is the ground of the world of cetana and acetana. Brahman is svatantra or self-dependent, and is pure and perfect, and is the One without a second, having no equal or superior entity. Cit and acit are dependent on Brahman for their form and function. Dvaita cosmology combats vivartavāda and parināmavāda, and traces the world process to efficient causality and the supreme will of Isvara. Isvara is not an illusionist or the immanent cause of creation that

enters into all beings and becomes one with the changing world, but is transcendentally pure and perfect. By Hisomnipotence, He creates all beings and rules them as their Supreme Lord. The creator is neither enveloped by  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  or  $avidy\bar{a}$  nor does he suffer from any  $parin\bar{a}mic$  changes. There is therefore no vivarta or  $vik\bar{a}ra$  in the pure creational motive.

Madhva psychology posits an infinity of eternal jīvas which are visesas and not visesanas, each having its own existence due to its vogvatā or disposition. On the basis of their võgyatā, they are classified into muktivõgya, tamõvõgya and misra jīva. The first are the sātvic jīvas that are eternally free. The second type is tāmasic or evil-minded, and they choose the way of sin and eternal damnation. The third type is intermediate, and though they do evil, they can choose the sātvika path and attain mukti. Dvaita philosophy of nature is realistic and pluralistic, and refers to eternal entities which are both positive and negative. The first consists of prakrti, ākāsa and kāla, and the second, of categories like abhāva. They form the cosmic order and are eternally different from Isvara and cit. Dvaita ethics insists on the distinction between good and evil, and defines their essential character. The cosmic order is also a moral order sustained by the gunas and karmas and ordained by Isvara who dispenses justice according to desert. The Kausītaki Upanisad and the Gītā recognise the reality of moral distinction and the difference between the daivic and asuric types and the consequences of their conduct and character.

The means of attaining *mukti* includes physical, moral and spiritual disciplines based on the *Upanisadic* injunctions of *sravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. The disciplines are

fully elaborated in the scheme of Astanga Yoga, comprising bodily purity, moral excellence and spiritual introspection. They have their consummation in bhakti which has its completion in divine grace. Dvaita philosophy has its fruition in the religious realisation of God and the attainment of Visnuloka. Though mukti is freedom from the ills of samsāra, there are differences in the enjoyment of the bliss of Brahman, determined by the peculiarity of each jīva. The idea that mukti connotes the identity of the jīva and Brahman or similarity between the two is opposed to the eternal difference between the creator and the creature, and the Upanisad teaches this truth when it says "Thou art not That", though the absolutists misconstrue the text as "Thou art That". Some modern exponents of Dvaita think that Dvaita is Brahmādvaitu and claim to bring out the monistic truth that Brahman alone is perfect and independent, advitīya, and is therefore not dualistic. Monotheism in itself is a form of monism, and on the Hegelian view of progress, it may be regarded as the culmination of Indian philosophic thought. But, since the whole system is based on the principle of absolute difference amongst the tatvas, it is safer to follow the ancient tradition and recognise it as a system having its own individuality. Its influence on Northern Vaisnavism, especially on the teaching of Caitanya and of Mahārāstra and Kannada saints is deep and permanent. Though Dvaita insists on ultimate difference and denies immanent causality, it is not radically different from Visistādvaitic Vaisnavism, as it affirms the supremacy of Visnu and the necessity of bhakti.

Vallabha, the founder of S'uddhādvaita Vedānta, was born in 1479 as the son of a Telugu Brahmin in Raipūr in the Central Provinces, and he felt it his mission to expound the Vedānta

Sūtras by combating Advaita. It is said that even at the age of fourteen, he took part in a Vedāntic controversy at the court of Kṛṣṇarāya at Vijayanagar, and established the truths of Brahmavāda or S'uddhādvaita by exposing the fallacies of Māyāvāda. He extols the Bhāgavata as the fulfilment of the three prasthānas, namely, the Upanisads, the Gītā and the Sūtras. His commentary on the Sūtras known as Anubhāsya and that on the Bhagavata bring out the essentials of his philosophy of religion, though the latter is incomplete. The Brahman of the Upanisads or the Paramatman of the S'rutis is the Bhagavan of the Bhagavata or S'rī Krsna, the suprapersonal Purusottama with a vigraha or body made of bliss. S'rī Kṛṣṇa, the highest Brahman, has a shining aprākṛta body made of sat, cit and ananda, and He eternally sports with the jīva in the Gölöka. Next to Purusöttama is Aksara Brahman having sat, cit and limited ananda, and He appears as the antaryāmin. He who has mere bhakti does not attain the highest. The higher state called pusti bhakti is the gift of God, and is svarūpānanda higher than Brahmānanda. Creation is the expression of Krsna līlā, and is not the work of an external designer or a magic show. Owing to the power of āvirbhāva or manifestation, that is in Para Brahman as sat, cit and ananda, the one overflows as the many. The world of matter emanates from sat, that of monadic jīvas radiates from cit and the antaryāmins are the outpourings of ānanda. The jīva is a spark of the shining Self, and is eternal, self-conscious and active, but, in the bound state of samsāra, has no ānanda or bliss. Bhakti is the only way of attaining divine bliss, and there are stages in the sādhanas. It is promoted by sravana, smarana and kīrtana. Those who meditate on the Lord by following the way of injunctions known as maryāda mārga or s'āstrīya bhakti attain sāyujya or

intimate communion; it is open only to Dvijas, and is difficult to practise in the Kali Yuga. But there is a higher state known as pusti bhakti or the way of pure love which is a gift of God or nirhetuka kaṭākṣa and is accessible to all. Brahman is not only sat, cit and ananda but also rasa. Rasa is the enjoyment of the love of Krsna as experienced by the  $G\bar{o}p\bar{i}s$  with their instinct for Kṛṣṇa, who is therefore called Gopijanavallabha. While s'āstrīya bhakti is mediate and progressive, pusti bhakti is immediate, and requires no meditative effort. Pusti is the inner sacrament or Brahma sambandha, which consists in ātma nivedana or the dedication by the devotee of the self and all its belongings to the Lord to whom they really belong. Pusti bhakti is the perfection of prema, and the mystic blessed with Kṛṣṇa prema gets the four kinds of mukti, and goes finally to Gōlōka beyond Vaikuntha, and revels in communion with the ever sportive Göpāla. It is sevā rather than pūjā that matters, self-gift rather than worship or prayer; and a life consecrated to Krsna has more value, especially in Kali, than the monastic life; but it pre-supposes the spirit of renunciation, which is hostile to the hedonistic temper. The consummation of busti bhakti is the intense love of the Gobis for Krsna in the two stages of samyoga or union and viprayoga or separation followed by the immortal bliss of communion. The S'uddhādvaita of Vallabha as a philosophy is allied more to Visistādvaita than to Advaita and its mysticism on the whole merits comparison with that of Nammāļvār and Gōdā as interpreted by some of its exponents.

S'rī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, the founder of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism, was born in 1485 in Navadvīpa, the seat of Sanskrit learning in Bengal and the home of Nyāya S'āstra. At that time, the

atmosphere was charged with materialism, though a few followed the monism of S'ankara. Even in his boyhood, Caitanya attained mastery in grammar and Nyāya, and he wrote a very subtle work on Nyāya, which was later destroyed to appease the jealousy of his Advaitic guru, Raghunath. Early in life, Caitanya became dissatisfied with Advaita. When he was initiated into Vaisnavism by Isvara Pūri, a Mādhva teacher at Gayā, he became intoxicated with Kṛṣṇa brema. With his magnetic personality, his logical profundity and soul-stirring devotion, Caitanya spread the gospel of Krsna brema throughout the country. The philosophy of Caitanya treats of visava or subject matter. sambandha or relation between God and the self, abhidheya or the means of realising Brahman and prayojana or the highest end. This was elaborated by Bala Deva who lived in the nineteenth century, in his Bhāsya on the Sūtras, following the teaching of Pūrna Prajña. It is summed up in the formula that the absolute is Kṛṣṇa, the beautiful, the beloved and the blissful. The absolute manifests. itself in three ways, as Brahman, Paramātman and Bhagavān, and has infinite s'aktis of which the chief are svarūpa s'akti, jīva sakti and māyā sakti. Bhagavān as Krsna is the absolute, and the concept of Rādhā-Krsna incarnate in Caitanya brings out the full import of Kṛṣṇa līlā. Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān has a bewitching form of unsurpassed and super-sensuous beauty with the three eternal svarūpa saktis or attributes of sandhinī, samvit and hlādinī, which correspond to sat, cit and ananda, of which the last is the most important. They are nirvisesa in the potential state, and savisesa in the actualised condition. Brahman as Bhagavān is and has sat, cit and ananda, and imparts these qualities to the jīva, and they are fully realised as hladini or bliss. Madhurya or sweetness of love has more value in religion than the might

of *Iswara*; and Kṛṣṇa as the sweetest of sweet love is a fuller expression of the divine nature than even Nārāyaṇa. S'rī Kṛṣṇa is advaya-jñāna-tatva or the absolute beauty without a blemish, in whom essence and existence are one, with mādhurya as the chief quality. The universe is the *līlā* of the Lord of bliss, though it is only a partial expression caused by the concealing power of His māyā sakti, and the true *līlā* is the eternal play of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as rāsa līlā. The jīva, as the taṭastha sakti of Bhagavān, is eternal and self-luminous, and the relation between the jīva and Bhagavān is acintya bhedā-bheda like that of the sun and its luminosity.

Bhakti is the only means of attaining the bliss of Kṛṣṇa, and varies in intensity from s'anti rati or the joy of peace to madhura rati or the joy of divine deliciousness. Bhakti, as the logic of the heart, arises from, and arouses, the bliss potency of S'rī Krsna, and it consists in love for love's sake, and does not seek any boon. Prīti or love gradually develops into a longing and admits of five stages. Krsna brema is divinely rooted, and is not soiled by carnality or hedonistic motives. In the second stage, called sukha prema, bhakti melts the heart and makes it glow with the fire of the love of Krsna. In the third stage of pranaya, love becomes invasive, and it assaults the Lover. Its effect is heightened in mana, in which bhakti compels the Lover to yield to the challenge of love's labour and loyalty. In the fifth stage of  $r\bar{a}ga$ , even severe pain is welcomed as a joy, if it has the content of Krsna brema. In anuraga, raga becomes irrepressible and deepens into the maddening love of mahābhāva like that of Rādhā. Bhakti rasa is spontaneous and intrinsic and not the effect of scriptural injunction, and it is unconditioned. Love is love for ever more and is never lost, and is ever fecundative. The

philosophy of bhakti, according to Caitanya, is an explication of the spiritual moods or bhavas of Krsna brema in the ascending order of intimacy culminating in madhura bhāva. The Caitanya school stresses the mādhurya aspect of Vaisnavism as the summum bonum of religious life, and has no use for the over-awing power of *Isvara*. The first mood is *Brahmānanda* or yōgic absorption in the absolute or Brahman who is the eternal lustre of the blissful body of Bhagavān. S'ānti rati is the result of devotional reverence to Nārāyana and not the bliss of Brndavana. Dasya priti is loving service to S'rī Kṛṣṇa as the cosmic ruler, and is based on reverence to the Lord. But it is an impediment to the free flow of love. Sakhya rati or the joy of friendship overcomes the creature consciousness of the bhakta and promotes the sense of equality and fellowship. In vātsalya rati or the joy of affection like that of Yas odā for the darling Kṛṣṇa, love deepens into tenderness. Madhura rati is Kṛṣṇa prema par excellence, and it bursts the barriers of conventional religion and artificial discipline. It is the consummation of disciplined devotion and not its cancellation. Krsna prema thrives only in the soil of pure love, and has its roots in self-renouncement and its fruition in the relish of the rasa of Rādhā-Krsna. The beauties of nature and the music of the spheres are but a partial expression of the infinite beauty of Kṛṣṇa, and the irresistibility of His love is epitomised in the mahābhāva of Rādhā. Absolute beauty divides itself into the forms of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to enjoy the double fruition of love. While meditation on Brahman gives mere santi emptied of the warmth of love, and devotion to Nārāyana is holy love to His aisvarya as it is in Vaikuntha, Kṛṣṇa prema is love for love's sake in which the lover and the beloved sport with each other for ever and forget their otherness in the ecstasy of love. Kṛṣṇa prema is as opposed to

viṣaya rāga, as light is opposed to darkness, and has no tinge of egoism. Madhura bhāva transcends the logical and moral disciplines detailed in the bhakti sāstra like sāstraic faith, upāsanā and sādhu saigha. Mere jñāna or yōga cannot open the flood-gates of the bliss potency of Bhagavān. It is only in the maddened love of madhura bhāva that the barriers of thought and will are broken. Then self-feeling is consumed in the fire of flaming love. Truth leads to goodness, goodness shines through beauty and beauty is consummated in Kṛṣṇa līlā. Love is no doubt a two-sided affair, but the feeling of separateness is overpowered in the ecstasy of union.

The nature of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa love is beautifully dramatised by Saint Jayadeva who lived in the twelfth century, in his immortal lyric poem called the Gīta Gōvinda. It is the allegory of a ripe soul having a genius for Kṛṣṇa prema yearning for the ecstasy of union. The mystic love of Rādhā-Krsna can be truly discerned spiritually and not by the worldly-minded man steeped in sensuality. The plot starts with the sports of Krsna with the other Gobis which moves the heart of Rādhā and excites her jealousy. The Lord of Love is in all hearts and cannot be exclusively possessed by any one mystic; and when Rādhā claims possession of Kṛṣṇa, He disappears suddenly. Remorse-stricken, she pines away in gloom and waits with divinest love. In the next scene, Kṛṣṇa has a vision of Rādhā's anguish and filled with unspeakable longing, He languishes in loneliness. Brahman has no joy in being ekākī, and His delight is in dallying with love. Love mediates between beauty and its alter ego. Pierced by the shafts of Rādhā-love, Krsna pines in grief, and is filled with cheerless melancholy. Rādhā is incensed at her unrequited love, suffers from the pain of vibralambha, and chides Him for His faithlessness. The Lord is really a jealous God, and unless the bhakta is stripped of his egoism and seeks Him as his sole refuge, he does not merit His saving grace. But Kṛṣṇa regards the jñānī who loves Him as His very life and closer than breath itself. Vaikuntha is itself worthless to the Lord if it is without the love of the jñānī. In the next scene, Krsna is stricken with remorse and pleads with her to place her feet on His head as a mark of forgiveness. The story is told that Jayadeva regretted the irreverent tone of the last sentence and left it blank; but in his absence, Krsna came and inserted the line "Place your feet on my head." The idea that, in the fulness of His saulabhya, the Lord seeks to efface Himself in the service of His devotee is a commonplace in Vaisnavism, and Kṛṣṇa is saulabhya in a concrete form. The fire of Kṛṣṇa prema fed by vairāgya exceeds that of carnal love just as solar light exceeds lamp light, and when love becomes infinite longing for the infinite, Kṛṣṇa can no longer resist it, and repress His own love. The lovers at last meet and rush into each other's arms, and are lost in the immortal bliss of union. The negative way of vislesa thus leads to the affirmation of divine union. The Rādhā-Krsna cult is a northern version of the nāyaka-nāyakī bhāva experienced by the Alvars. The art of divine love as portrayed in the Vaisnava teaching of nāyaka-nāyakī bhāva or mahābhāva refers to a mystic experience which transcends sensuous love. Every form of Vaisnavite mysticism is sensual in garb but has a spiritual meaning.

While the *Vaiṣṇavism* of Vallabha and Caitanya stresses the mystic side of Kṛṣṇa *līlā* perfected in the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa relation, the *bhakti* movement of Mahārāṣṭra brings out its social side and the need for the democratic diffusion of *bhakti* to

all humanity. It also emphasises the worship of Krsna as the lord of Rukminī and not of Rādhā. It is closely related to the cult of Ramananda of Benares who is identified with the teacher of Iñanes vara's father. Iñanes vara is the founder of the bhakti school in Mahārāstra. The bhakta does not reason God but feels Him as his very life. Bhakti, however, presupposes the renunciation of ahankāra and the knowledge of the self and its relation to Bhagavān who is worshipped as Vithobā. Inner devotion is more vital than conformity to customary morality, and is the very sine qua non of spirituality. Ascetic selfrepression has no value for the bhakta as he treats the body as the very temple of God. Bhakti blossoms like the lotus at the dawn of sun-light, when the bhakta realises God. Owing to the immanence of God in all jīvas, what is possible to one man is possible to every man and the true test of bhakti is in service to humanity. Bhakti is said to be ninefold, and each form has its own efficacy in securing salvation. The chief forms are sravana or listening to the glory and goodness of God as Parīksit did, kīrtana or singing the songs of divine love like Nārada, smarana or the loving reverence of the Lord's love like Prahlāda's, devotion to God and godly men like that of Akrūra, service like that of Hanuman, faith in God's fellowship like that of Arjuna and self-surrender like that of Bali. Mere visions and auditions are psychic states which should not be confused with mystic realisation. When the mystic speaks of the touches and thrills of God. he uses only sense symbolism in his desire for a realistic description.

Among the well-known *bhaktas* or mystics of Mahārāṣṭra are Nāmdev, Eknāth, Tukārām and Rāmdās who lay stress on "the social, synthetic, personal and activistic aspects of

mysticism." Nāmdev (1270-1350), born in a tailor's family, was addicted to robbery in his youth, but was seized with remorse which led to his redemption by the grace of God. His devotional outpourings to Pandarinath are embodied in his abhangas which are well-known for their devotional fervour. He holds that a contrite heart is more acceptable to Panduranga than wealthy offerings without it. The removal of egoism is more important than the practice of vows and vigils. Not by pilgrimage nor by austerity but only by inner purity can He be seen face to face. Eknāth (1533-1598) dedicated himself to the service of God by singing sankīrtans in Marāthi and his life is an example of a bhakta who did the duties of his station in life with his mind fixed always in the inner Divinity in all beings. The true bhakta realises God everywhere. He had no faith in caste distinctions and it is said that, at one time, he gave to the untouchables the food offered to his pitrs. Tukārām (1607-1649), the son of a farmer near Poona, was sorely tried by God and subjected to intense suffering. But, unlike Eknāth, he felt that godliness could not be compromised with worldly life and at one time he refused presents from Sivāji; he courted misery to enable him to seek His mercy in the dark night of the soul. Service to God is superior to salvation. His bhakti became so intense that at one time in a mood of desperation, he decided on suicide, when he had a direct vision of God and enjoyed blessedness. Rāmdās (1608-1681 A.D.) was an ardent devotee of Rama and after a severe trial was blessed with direct Divine experience. As the spiritual teacher of Sivāji he instilled into him the courage to conquer the Muhammadan invader, returned the kingdom offered to him by Sivāii and helped him in the re-establishment of righteous rule. His Dāsabodha contains his spiritual autobiography. By selfsurrender or ātmanivedana, the highest kind of bhakti, the

bhakta became one (vibhakta) with God by His grace and finally attained sāyujya. True spirituality, to him, lies in the performance of duty with the heart set on God, and all people are spiritually one though socially different.

S'aiva Siddhānta is the systematic exposition of the S'rutis. the S'aiva Agamas and the experiences of the Nayanmars, and in its philosophic aspect as formulated by Srīkantha, the commentator on the Sūtras, it compels comparison with the essentials of Rāmānuja's system though there are radical differences between the two in theology and ritualism. It accepts realism and satkāryavāda and posits three ultimate realities. Pati, pasu and pāsam, which can be distinguished but not separated. Pati is the Supreme Lord S'iva who is formless, as He transcends the limitations of prakrti and yet, out of mercy, He assumes eight spiritual forms, but does not incarnate like Visnu. S'iva and S'akti are inseparable like fire and heat and S'iva-s'akti brings out the dynamic love of the Godhead and the redemptive principle of grace. Pasu or the soul is caught up in pāsam and the confusions of karma and becomes a mode of matter. By moral and spiritual discipline it can realise itself and become a mode of God. Religion is the transition from ātmadarsana to S'ivadarsana as the jīva without S'iva is like the consonant without the vowel, and mukti or sāyujya consists in intuiting S'iva as love and becoming one with Him. Mukti is not the loss of personality, but is self-effacement in the service of S'iva. From the pragmatic standpoint, S'aiva Siddhānta is not much different from Visistādvaita if it accepts the theory of the immanent causality of Brahman as expounded by the Sūtrakāra and the redemptive purpose of avatāra as revealed in the Gītā. The S'rīkara Bhāṣya on the Sūtras by S'ripati expounds Viras aivism from the Bhedabheda standpoint

and is called *Viseṣādvaita*. It refutes *Māyāvāda* and rejects *Pāñcarātra Āgama* and by stressing *Vīrasaivism*, it is contrasted with the school of S'rīkaṇṭha which is interpreted by Appayya Dīkṣita in terms of *Advaita*.

Sikhism is a virile type of ethical religion which has affinities with Vaisnavism in its protestant and democratic aspects. Its founder, Guru Nanak, was born in 1469, a few years before Luther, and it was his mission to stress the essentials of religion by rejecting formalism and ceremonialism and to bring out the common features of Hinduism and Islam. Sikhism affirms its faith in monotheism and metempsychosis, but rejects caste exclusiveness and social distinctions. The Sikh worships the Adi Grantha Sāheb as a divine revelation, but he does not accept the infallibility of Vedic authority and the value of image worship. All men live, move and have their being in God and they belong to God as much as God belongs to them. The world is itself the temple of Hari and the true Guru is Brahman or Hari. The jīva is immortal and though he suffers from karma and the ills of samsara, he can attain moksa by bhakti and faith in the Guru. The disciple distinguishes between the eternal and the temporal, renounces worldliness though he lives in the world as an active member of society, and seeks to become one with God by repeating Hari-mantra and attaining the Guru's grace. The ten gurus represent respectively the ten cardinal virtues of humility, obedience, equality of all jīvas, service, self-sacrifice, justice, mercy, purity, calmness and courage. Evil is a moral taint like lying, lust and love of wealth and it lapses into sin when it becomes disobedience of the divine law: the root cause of sin is ahankara. True living is higher than truth and it is the life of devotion to the Guru and God. Freedom consists in becoming one with God and attaining eternal life. Sikhism stresses the monotheistic faith and fervour of *Vaisnavism* and its ethical teaching of spiritual democracy.

The Brahma Samaj accepts the theory of natural revelation and draws its inspiration mainly from the Upanisads, but rejects the doctrine of supernatural and miraculous revelation and also the scepticism of māyāvāda. Each individual has the innate power of inferring the existence of God or Brahman and intuiting Him by saying "My existence is self-evident, and since I am, Brahman also exists." This intuitive experience (ātma pratyaya) is spontaneous and selfevident and possible to all individuals, and Brahma Vidyā is the rational exposition of spiritual experiences, and is monotheistic and not monistic. Intuition is the fulfilment of reason and is not opposed to it. The proof of the existence of God is fourfold, the cosmological, the teleological, the ontological and the moral, and it shows the four stages of human development. The first is the physical proof that God is the cosmic cause. The second is the biological argument that Isvara is the Designer of the universe. The third is the philosophical idea of *Isvara* as the supreme Reality. The last is the moral proof that He is morally perfect. These proofs bring out respectively the power, wisdom, infinity and holiness of God. Every scripture is a revelation of God, and is worthy of respect, though the Upanisads form the main source of the teaching of the Samājists as spiritual children of the rsis. The chief attributes of Brahman are satyam, jñānam, anantam, ānandam, sivam, advaitam and suddham. The first three are metaphysical ideas, and they define His nature (svarūpa lakṣana) as the true of the true. the all-knowing and the infinite. As concrete infinite, He is One without a second as the Soul of all selves, and there cannot be two infinites. The moral attribute is the idea of God as the holy and the pure. God is essentially love, and His love transcends human love. He is infinitely blissful, and makes others happy.

Daily life is hallowed by the loving remembrance of God and by worship which is congregational as well as private. Worship of God consists of aradhana, dhvana and prarthana, and ātma samarpana and it is purely spiritual. Ārādhana is the adoration of God by dwelling on His attributes. Dhyana is the practice of the presence of God, and is a higher stage than ārādhana. Prārthana is a spiritual prayer which consists in seeking the guidance of God. The three forms of devotion based on faith, love and holiness form the essence of religion. In congregational or Samāj worship, ārādhana is done by the chanting of selected Upanisadic mantras, and it is followed by dhyana or silent meditation. The ubasaka prays in the Upanisadic way by uttering the hymn "Lead me from untruth to truth, from darkness to light, and from death to immortality. Oh, merciful One, protect us by Thy mercy." Love and service constitute the true worship of God. The Samājist insists on the attainment of inward holiness and the practice of truth and kindness in individual and social life. The knowledge that Brahman is sarvajña and the jīva is alþajña fosters humility. The Samājist has no faith in the elaborate rituals associated with popular religion, in image worship and the need for incarnations; but he has a living faith in God as the Soul of our souls. Brahman is ananta and niravayava, and idolatry and incarnation are opposed to the infinitude of Brahman. The Brahmō is also opposed to caste distinctions, as he thinks that the caste system conflicts

with the promotion of the virtue of human brotherhood, and he thinks it a duty to break the restrictions of caste and abolish the whole system. Brahmoism affirms the eternity of the self and its gradual progress towards perfection, in which the self becomes one with God in knowing, willing and feeling; but it rejects the monistic view that in mukti there is loss of personality. Rājā Rām Mōhan Rāi, the founder, was born in 1770 in Murshidabad and his culture was essentially liberal. The basis of the creed is intuition and the book of nature. Devendranath Tagore was attracted by the beauty of the Upanisads and its Kesub Chander Sen was predisposed towards Vaisnavism and the religion of bhakti. The two scriptures are the volume of nature and intuitions implanted in the mind. The mercy and wisdom of God are written on the universe. God never becomes man by assuming a human body. Yoga is Vedic or objective, Vedāntic or subjective and Paurānic or Bhakti Yōga. The first refers to God in nature, the second to the soul of our souls and the third is the realisation of God working in history and in individual life. Brahmōism is claimed to be the essence of all religions, and is not an eclecticism that merely collects bits of truth. Salvation is the deliverance of the soul from moral disease. The New Dispensation founded by Sen proclaims the unity of all creeds. There is one music but many instruments; one body but many limbs. It stresses the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. God is Hari who takes away evil and sin. The theistic and mystic aspects of Brahmōism are largely and increasingly influenced by Vaisnavism.

The Ārya Samāj was founded by Svāmi Dayānanda Sarasvati (1824-1883) in the year 1872 A.D. and its main object was not the inauguration of a new religion, but the

resuscitation of Vedic authority and reformation of the varṇās-rama ideal. He proved the infallibility of Vedic revelation and the universality of its moral and spiritual truths. He held that the Vedic religion was the fountain-head of religions, but did not accept the antithesis between reason and faith and the later revelations based on supernaturalism. He affirmed the eternal existence of matter, soul and God, but distinguished them by saying that matter exists as sat, soul or ātman as cit and God or Paramātman as sat, cit and ānanda. True upāsana consists in the worship of God as saguņa or pure and perfect and nirguņa as free from evil and other imperfections, and thus attaining mukti. Though the Samāj rejects the faith in image worship and the perpetuation of varnāsrama based on birth, it has some affinity with Vaiṣṇavite theism and is likely to be deeply influenced by Visiṣṭādvaitic thought.

Any account of modern Hinduism will be incomplete if it does not recognise the disinterested services rendered by Mrs. Besant in the cause of its revival in general and Kṛṣṇaism in particular at a time when Indian intellectuals were steeped in naturalism and agnosticism and Hinduism was threatened with extinction.

The life and teachings of S'rī Rāmakṛṣṇa are an inspiring example, in modern times, of the manifold ways in which the seeker after God sees God and realises the synthetic unity of all religions. As a supermystic, he experimented with the truths of religion, sought to experience God in all His manifestations, and communicated the joy of such communion to humanity. In his strenuous sādhana for twelve years, S'rī Rāmakṛṣṇa acquired so much mastery over the desires of sensibility that his body would automatically recoil from contact with coir

and other worldly things, and he would regard every woman as the living manifestation of the divine Mother. He practised the varieties of Vaisnavite sādhanas and bhāvas like vātsalva and dasva as elaborated by Caitanya and his spiritual quest bore immediate fruit. With a view to attaining the right attitude of a dasa he imitated Hanuman, and it is reported that. when his practice became perfect, he had actually an enlargement of the coccyx by about an inch. By ceaseless thinking on the sufferings of Sītā he felt that his life was likewise a tale of woe. When bhakti deepens into the ardour of  $G\bar{o}b\bar{i}$  love, the lover is caught up in the flame, and this experience known as mahāhhāva is the culmination of all powered by the maddening love for Kṛṣṇa, S'rī Rāmakṛṣṇa lost himself for six months in the agony of separation from the Lord, and it is said that minute drops of blood oozed out from the pores of his skin. God-possession is a malady of the mystic which is beyond the province of the medical materialist and the psycho-analyst, and is cured only by the mystic becoming one with God. The saint likewise practised many other sādhanas, and his chief message to the modern world is his insistence on the equal efficacy of the four yogas as steps to realisation and the unity of all religions. Though the Rāmakrsna Mission gives the highest place to Advaita, the mysticism of S'rī Rāmakṛṣṇa recognises the equality of jñāna and bhakti and the saving power of God's grace; and such a synthetic attitude augurs well for the promotion of inter-Vedantic understanding. The Vaisnavite experiences of the saint resemble those of Nammālvār in many respects and reveal a more or less common incarnational descent

The famous song of the true Vaiṣṇava made popular by Mahātmā Gāndhi brings out the character of the Vaiṣṇava:

"He is the true Vaiṣṇava who knows and feels Another's woes as his own.

Ever ready to serve, he never boasts.

He bows to every one and despises no one,
Keeping his thought, word, and deed pure.

Blessed is the mother of such an one. He
Reverences every woman as his mother.

He keeps an equal mind and does not
Stain his lips with falsehood; nor
Does he touch another's wealth.

No bonds of attachment can hold him.

Ever in tune with Rāma nāma, his body
Possesses in itself all places of pilgrimage.

Free from greed and deceit, passion
And anger, this is the true Vaiṣṇava."

In instituting a comparison between Visistādvaitic Vaismavism and the Semitic religions and discovering their affinities, the method of approach should be based more on personal mystic experience than on supernaturalism and historicity. Institutional or official Christianity seeks to prove that the Bible is the only book of revelation, Iesus the only begotten Son of God and World Saviour and the church the only chosen community of God; and that the Kṛṣṇa of the Gītā who resembles Christ in many ways is a mythical figure and the Krsna of the Bhāgavata defies all the laws of ethics and the rules of religion. But God fulfils Himself in various ways, and to a seeker after God, the idea that He is the indwelling Love in every man, who is the son of God, is more inspiring than the beliefs in supernaturalism and historicity. Standardised Christianity has, however, changed with time and place, as it got its theology mainly from Greece, its

organisation from Rome and its faith in personal worth as opposed to Papacy from the Protestant countries. In India with its spirituality and genius for Vedāntic life, the Sermon on the Mount will find its philosophic justification in the Divine Song on the chariot and its Vedāntic experience will afford the rational and spiritual basis for Christian mysticism. At any rate, a sympathetic study of Nammalvar and the Nazarene is sure to establish spiritual contacts between S'rī Vaisnavism and Indian Christianity as the two historic religions of redemption, and bring out the truth that the union of retributive law and redemptive love embodied in the twin ideas of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of the Godhead as Nārāyana and S'rī with their historic incarnations in humanity in moments of moral and spiritual crises is the surest guarantee for mukti and the most inspiring gospel of universal salvation or sarva mukti. But it is in mysticism that Christianity meets Vaisnavism and finds a philosophic justification. The mystic with his hunger for the absolute is more interested in realising God than in reasoning about Him, and there are three stages in God-realisation known as purgation, illumination and the joy of unitive consciousness, which roughly correspond to Karma Yōga, Jñāna Yōga and Bhakti Yōga. When the soul realises itself by self-stripping, its homing instinct asserts itself and it longs for union with God, and at last becomes immersed in the eternal bliss of divine union. Christian mysticism becomes fully coherent when it recognises the eternity of the self or atman, the indwelling of God as the sarīrin and the true meaning of salvation as sāyujya,

Islam has shown more tenacity and group feeling than any other world religion, and in its theological rigidity

and loyalty to the founder, it has established the fact that faith can be standardised and made uniform. The student of the history of mediaeval India interested in comparative religion will find affinities and contrasts between the monotheistic fervour of Islam and the virile Vaisnavite faiths in North India in the aspect of personal as opposed to institutional religion. He will also note the attempts to avoid deadly conflicts between Hinduism and Islam by devotees like Kabīr, whose very life was universal religion in action. There is a striking similarity between Sūfi and Visistādvaitic experience, and the Indian Sūfi with his spiritual instinct is sure to discover in virile Vaisnavite mysticism a philosophy of religion which guarantees God to all persons, and affords a philosophic basis for spiritual democracy. Sūfism is essentially mystic as it defines religion as the spiritual quest of the self for union with the in-dwelling God. of love. Godhead is God and He reveals Himself in the five planes of essence, attributes, actions, similitudes and ocular vision which roughly correspond to para, vyūha, vibhava, antaryāmin and arcā. The soul dies as a mineral to become a plant, dies as a plant to become animal, dies as animal to become man and will die as man to return to God. Each soul is a ray of the eternal sun or God, lives and moves in Him. Divine beatitude is realised in four stages when the soul is freed-from the body and reunites with God from whom it was separated, but never divided. In the ocean of divine love 'I' and 'thou' get dissolved, but are not destroyed. Sūfism is thus akin to Rāmānuja's idea of God as Love and will become fully justified if it accepts the eternity of the atman, the immanence of Paramatman and the eventual atmanisation of all selves.

Govindācārya Svāmin's Metaphysique of Mysticism, Section XII.

Every monotheistic religion is anxious to disseminate its faith and increase its fold, but in its zeal for proselytisation, it develops a monopolistic and military mentality which stifles the sātvika spirit. Its dogmas are often deduced from blind beliefs which form the major premise of fanaticism, and the conclusions have a compelling and coercive force, starting with terrorism and ending with persecution. The deductive method has often been an ally of dogmatism and exclusiveness, and it is only the inductive method of spiritual experimentation and verification that has furnished the corrective to the perils of fanaticism. The history of "Vīra' Vaisnavism shows that it is no exception to this rule; but if its Visistādvaitic inwardness is developed, it sheds its exclusiveness and becomes expansive. The idea of God as the s'arīrin of all and as in-dwelling Love offers the most inspiring motive for philosophic enlightenment and the achievement of social solidarity. Sūfism and Vedāntism have their meeting ground only in the forum of this philosophic faith.

The claims of vital Vaisnavism to be a universal religion can be established by a liberal reinterpretation of its teachings in the light of the modern methods of criticism without in any way sacrificing its fundamentals. The history of its growth itself proves the truth that in its critical periods of conflict with alien religions, it has responded to the changing times by concentrating on essentials or sārāsāra viveka without insisting on the need for conformity to customary morality and ācāras and standardisation of thought. In this method, what is required is a comparative study of the varieties of Vaiṣṇavite sects and experiences with a view to finding out their common features, and correlating them with the central truths of Visiṣṭādvaita. Each sect has developed its own

doctrines and rituals in accordance with the needs of its Guru paramparā and sampradāya, and it is necessary to study the history of their growth as determined by the nature of the disposition of its followers and the environment in which they were placed, if we are to eliminate the non-essentials and discern only the foundational truths. Each sect has stressed certain specific aspects. For example, the schools of South Indian Vaisnavism are known for their philosophical subtlety and thoroughness. The Mahārāstra variety has stressed the need for the establishment of the spiritual brotherhood of humanity by spreading the gospel of bhakti to all, and arresting the iconoclastic zeal of hostile faiths. The ethical and monotheistic fervour of Vaisnavism is brought into prominence in the sects of Northern India. In its revitalised and virile form, it has become popular in the Punjab, which has always withstood the onslaught of Islam. The Caitanya cult in Bengal has specialised in the mysticism associated with the worship of Rādhā-Krsna, and the same interest in the Bhāgavata religion is noticeable in the Vallabha devotion to Kṛṣṇa līlā. The Brahma Samāj stemmed the tide of Christian proselytisation by reinterpreting it in terms of Hinduism or Vaisnavism and thus absorbing it. Christ is accepted as a Son of God but churchianity, which makes him the only Son of God, is rejected. The teachings of Rabindranath Tagore, Aurabindo Ghosh, Mahātmā Gāndhi and S'rī Rāmakrsna have contributed not a little to the resuscitation of Hinduism in general and Vaisnavism in particular. If the term Hinduism means, as its letters imply, the theory of the history of the unity of nature serving as a fitting environment for the knowledge of the individual as the eternal and immutable atman and the realisation by him of the Deity that is immanent in all beings as their sarīrin, then it is the same as Religion and coeval with Visiṣṭādvaitic Vaiṣṇavism. It takes into account the unity of physical nature, the need for self-realisation and union with Divinity that is in every individual. The history of religions in India shows that religion is one though its manifestations are varied. Religion has a future if its essentials are distinguished from the non-essentials and not identified with mere rituals, dogmas or myths. The religion of the future consists in the realisation of God or Bhagavān and communicating Godliness to others. It is the eternal religion of Visiṣṭādvaita realised in different ways through the ages.

### CHAPTER XXII

## CONCLUSION

#### SECTION I

THE threads of the various arguments developed in the preceding chapters may now be gathered together as a single synthetic whole made of parts which are vitally related. The traditional method of the Indian philosophers consists in establishing their own siddhanta by the refutation of rival systems, and each system fortifies its position by stating all the būrva baksas or possible objections to it and demolishing But this dialectic warfare was conducted in an atmosphere of disinterested criticism in conformity with recognised methods of textual and philosophical interpretation. high level of intellectual honesty and moral and spiritual earnestness that marked their polemical warfare is often brought out in the conduct of the defeated opponent becoming the disciple of the victorious philosopher and cheerfully seeking his spiritual guidance. The conversions made by Buddha, S'ankara, Rāmānuja, Pūrņaprajna, Caitanya and others were due to inner conviction, and not to coercion, and the saving spiritual quality of the teacher. The disappearance of many systems of thought prevalent at the time of Buddha and of Vedāntic schools like Bhedābheda may be traced to the struggle of moral and spiritual ideals for existence and the survival of the best. At any rate, the popularity of the three schools of Vedānta in modern times is due to their innate vitality and their power to satisfy the religious and philosophic needs of their followers. The system of Visistādvaita has stood the test of ages and its future rests on the capacity and character of its followers to live up to its lofty traditions and to spread its message to the whole world. The supreme duty of its present day follower lies in his presentation of the essentials of the system by freeing it from the excrescences which are inevitable in institutional religion and its re-orientation in terms of modern thought without impairing its integrity. The attempt is made in this concluding chapter to sum up the central truths of the siddhanta without entering into controversial discussions, and estimate its value as a synthetic philosophy of religion claiming to have a universal appeal. The logical method of exposition adopted in the whole work is eminently suitable to the study of Visistādvaita and will be followed in the concluding survey also.

The Visiṣṭādvaitic theory of pramāṇas seeks to reconcile the conflicting claims of reason and revelation through the mediating link of spiritual realisation, and steers a middle course between dogmatism and intellectualism. The Veda is the breath of Brahman, and is, in an extended sense, a body of impersonal spiritual truths, which can be tested by the faith of reason and the authority of intuitive experience. This way of knowing Brahman does full justice to the threefold authority of sruti, yukti and anubhava, and accepts the supreme validity and value of the Veda as the eternal foundation of Truth, on which the founders of systems and sects rely for their support. The tradition of Vāmadeva, S'vetaketu, Bōdhāyana, Prahlāda

and Nammalvar is continued through the ages in spite of historic irrelevances. In the same way, there is a continuity in the kingdoms of knowledge given in sense-perception and spiritual and religious experience corresponding to the three kinds of existence, acit, cit and Brahman. In all cases, knowledge is relational, and relation is the mother category of metaphysics. Every judgment expresses a subject-object relation and the ultimate subject is the supreme Self. is thus possible to know the absolute by the absolute knowledge of every object and subject of knowledge when  $j\tilde{n}\bar{a}na$  is purified and perfected as in mukti. Acit and cit have their meaning and value only in Brahman, the ultimate subject of all knowledge, perceptual, spiritual and religious. In the same way, there is a continuity in the three tests of truth, pragmatism, correspondence and coherence, based on the principle that truth is a progress from the partial to the perfect, and that there is nothing unreal. Psychology, logic, ethics, philosophy and religion are inter-related, and every theory of truth has its own value in the synthetic scheme of Visistādvaita. practical life or vyavahāra, the pragmatic test is relevant and fruitful; it relates logic to psychology and defines truth as fidelity to relevant facts satisfying the practical needs of life. But it has no finality. The realist's test of correspondence does justice to the reality of the external world, when he defines truth as fidelity to facts on the ground that jñāna reveals objects as they are. In nature things belong together and even error is privation of knowledge and contains an element of truth. Even illusions and the imagined objects of fiction subsist and are as real as facts that exist. But realism does not go far enough, as it does not stress the priority and primacy of the experiencing subject or self and the all-inclusive nature of the supreme Self. The idealistic view of coherence recognises the value of internal relations and the work of thought, and includes the correspondence view in an extended sense. But it does not go far enough, as it may lapse into subjectivism. The coherence of jñāna is based on the immanent criterion that truth is the whole, includes the more of itself and is ahead of us though it is now circumscribed, owing to the absence of logical and moral discipline. Purified knowledge is a progression from the perceptual and the conceptual levels to the integral intuition of the whole of Reality in mukti. The Visistādvaitic theory re-interprets that of external relations in terms of internal relation, and the latter in terms of the organic relation of sarīra-sarīrin. All-Self can be known by the finite self, when its consciousness which is now of the earth earthy, is purified, and expands into all-comprehensive knowledge. Truth is then not inferred but divined and the mukta sees all things in Brahman and Brahman in all things. Thus epistemology in its extended sense affirms the knowability of Reality in all its levels.

The theory of knowledge is the theory of the knowledge of reality, and thus leads to ontology. To apprehend that Brahman is, is to comprehend what He is, and therefore Brahman is saguna, and is defined as real Reality, satyasya satyam, the inner subject of all thinking beings and the ever blissful Self. As the sat, Brahman exists in, and for, itself, and is self-contained. It is the One that pervades the many, but does not pass over into the many. It is the absolute that is the fact of facts, and is the true of the true, as it includes cit-acit and exceeds their content and value. The metaphysical highest is also the ethical highest and Brahman as ādhāra becomes Īsvara as niyantā, who is the righteous ruler of all and who dispenses justice according to the karma of the

individual. This view reconciles the conflict between omnipotence and righteousness. Isvara, as sesī or svāmī, is the way as well as the goal of life, and every karma is kainkarva or worship of the Lord, who is the ultimate actor in the moral and spiritual world. Brahman exists in five forms, the eternal in the world beyond, the infinite that creates the finite, the immanent that resides in all beings and the incarnations, historical as well as permanent, and the inner purpose of this fivefold function is to enter into humanity and redeem it from its avidvā-karma. The threefold relation between Brahman and the world of cit-acit is explained by the S'ārīraka S'āstra in terms of the comprehensive term sarīra-sarīrī sambandha. It means that the finite is rooted in the infinite, sustained by its will, and serves its redemptive end as a free agent. This view reconciles the claims of monism and theism and those of transcendence and immanence. Brahman is the sarīrin in this special sense, and is the life of our life and the inner Ruler immortal in all beings; and every term, thing or thought that connotes the sarīra also connotes the sarīrin as He enters into cit and acit and gives them name and form.

The cosmology of Visiṣṭādvaita follows from its ontological view of Brahman as the sarīrin of the universe of cit-acit by a suitable application of satkārya-vāda. The sat without a second, which is undifferentiated in praļaya, differentiates itself into the world of nāma-rūpa. The precreational stage is a real possibility in which cit and acit are pre-existent in a subtle but indistinguishable way and not non-existent, and in sṛṣṭi the potential becomes actual. In both the stages Brahman exists with its prakāras or modes. The absolute, according to Rāmānuja, is not Brahman and the world of cit and acit in the mathematical sense but is

Brahman in the world in the metaphysical sense. The three are distinguishable but not divisible, eternal but not external. Brahman enters into the world as its immanent cause, but is unaffected by the world process and is therefore transcendental. This view reconciles the logical or pantheistic view and the ethical or deistic view. The process of nature is in the interests of the progress of the self and both subserve the inner purpose of Brahman to grow into the universe with a view to the moulding of muktas. Vedānta without cosmology would be mere ātmavidyā and not Brahmavidyā, and the chief value of cosmology lies in its insistence on the truth that the ground of the universe is also the subject of religious meditation.

Visistādvaitic psychology has a metaphysical basis, and refers to a plurality of eternal and immutable jīvas having jñāna as their essential attribute. The jīva is an atomic or infinitesimal entity; but its intelligence is infinite, though limited or circumscribed by karma. Selfhood is presupposed in the mental process consisting of cognitive, affective and conative factors, and it alone gives meaning to the unity and continuity of the psychic complex in all its normal and abnormal states. The jīva is substance-attribute; it is a visesva and visesana with monadic uniqueness and modal dependence on Brahman; this view removes the defects of naive pluralism and monism. As the logical self, it derives its substantiality from Brahman, and is called its aprthaksiddha visesana, ubādeva and amsa. As the ethical self, the iva has moral freedom but dedicates itself to the service of the Lord who is the seṣī or svāmī. As the aesthetic ego, it is made of beauty which is a joy for ever and which is imparted to it by the absolute beauty of Brahman. The atman derives its form and function

from Brahman, depends on His redemptive will and exists for His aesthetic satisfaction, and is therefore His sarīra. It is different from Brahman in the denotative aspect as it is a unique individual, and one with Him as it connotes Him as His self. This is the paradox of the theory of prakāra which alone satisfies the needs of theistic monism and reconciles monadism and pantheism. The term 'ātman' brings out the meaning of the jīva and its relation to Paramātman or Vāsudeva, and the terms 'soul,' 'spirit' and 'self' are not adequate enough for the purpose. This view has the modesty and merit of ascribing the evils of life and the irrationalism of the universe to the avidyā-ridden jīva and purity and perfection to Brahman. As Visistādvaita affirms the fundamentalis similarity of the intelligence of all jīvas and also of Brahman; it provides full scope for the promotion of spiritual brother. hood and social solidarity.

The metaphysician who speculates on the nature of Brahman turns mumukşu when he seeks liberation from the miseries of metempsychosis by re-union with Brahman. By reflecting on the trivial and transient pleasures of life here and in Svarga he becomes sick-minded; but such a pessimism is only a passing mood as it leads to a positive yearning for Brahma-jñāna. The mumukşu is interested more in shedding worldliness in bitter earnest than in escaping from the world. As a seeker after God, he prefers bhakti to mukti, if mukti is emptied of divine life and love. Visiṣṭādvaita prescribes a course of Vedāntic culture or sādhana, moral, spiritual and religious, for the mumukṣu to free himself from the confusions of avidyā and the fetters of karma and to attain Brahman. It consists in the building up of bhakti by means of Karma Yōga, Jñāna Yōga and Bhakti Yōga as described in the Bhagavad

Gītā. Karma Yōga consists in transfiguring kāmya karma into niskāma karma by avoiding the one-sided ethical views of hedonism and rationalism. Kāmya karma, as action impelled` by inclination and induced by the idea of utility, has no place in the Gītā view of morals. But niṣkāma karma is disinterested duty done for duty's sake as determined by buddhi. It is "renunciation in action and not of action," and leads to selfsovereignty. But it is only a negative view of morals; on its constructive side, every karma becomes a kainkarya to God, and this is deduced by the moral insight that the ultimate subject or agent of moral action is Isvara Himself. Karma, on the moral level, implies the freedom of the self to shape its future though its prārabdha karma is causally determined and cannot be changed. From the religious standpoint karma including the duties of perfect obligation is consecrated service arising from attuning oneself to the will of God. Niskāma karma presupposes the spiritual knowledge of the ātman as it is and not merely as it does. The first step in the process is the knowledge of the distinction between purusa and the pseudoself made in the moulds of prakrti on account of avidya, and the elimination of the false view of the self. The next stage is the practice of yōgic introversion by stilling the vāsanās and seeking the inner quiet by entering into samādhi. This is the kaivalva stage of the ārūdha or the orison of spiritual sānti. But kaivalya is only on the outskirts of mukti or on the pathway to it, and it is a halfway house between the state of dehātmānubhava and God-realisation by bhakti.

Bhakti consists in changing self-centredness into God-centredness and turning the mind from sensuality to the spiritual love of God as the Self of all beings. Equipped with the seven sādhanas and disciplined by the eightfold yōga, the bhakta

chooses any one of the thirty-two upasanas and meditates on Brahman as his s'arīrin. Meditation consists in the intellectual knowledge of Brahman as the brakārī, the feeling of His loving presence and the ceaseless practice of bhakti till the moment of death. Reflection clarifies the nature of bhakti as the loving recollection of a pre-natal contact with Brahman. Feeling changes recollection into a loving experience and will makes the mood a devotional habit. The recognition of God becomes vivid like a direct cognition; but the vividness of the vision is not the vision itself, but an intimation and foretaste of the realisation of the bliss of Brahman in the world of Vaikuntha. While bhakti is thus a continuous loving meditation on Brahman, in strict conformity to Vedāntic injunctions, and is open only to the three higher castes or dvijas, prapatti, as self-surrender to the redemptive grace of God, does not require the trying and tedious discipline of bhakti and opens the gateway of God to all jīvas including even the subhuman species. The distinction between the two has given rise to two divergent schools of thought, the Tenkalai and the Vadakalai. The former says that the grace of God flows where it listeth and the prapanna has only to respond to the free flow of antecedent grace by casting away the burden of responsibility and the conceit of self-righteousness. seeks the sinner and would cease to be the Saviour if moksa is to be won only by merit. The Vadakalai school treats prapatti as a yoga like bhakti on the ground that one who desires grace should also deserve it. It insists on contrition and deathless faith in the Saviour, as the way of opening the flood gates of The only effort required is the knowledge of the krbā. futility of mere human effort and casting oneself on the mercy of the Redeemer. This effortless effort is only a vyāja or occasion for the self-manifestation of mercy. If this view be

abandoned, the result would be to make God arbitrary, accept the theory of predestination and destroy the moral order of the world. In the former case, God seeks the sinner and wins him by His antecedent or unconditioned grace. The two schools are distinguished in various ways. The former is called by various names—justification by faith, the self-surrender theory or the mārjāra way in which the cat carries the kitten. latter is called justification by works, the volitional theory or the markata way in which the baby monkey clings to the mother. Both the schools accept the Visistadvaita view that S'rīman Nārāyaņa Himself is both the upāya and the upeya, and in His dual capacity fulfils Himself as law and love. The mumuksu has the instinct for God which cannot be explained by the analytic intellect; and in explaining the alogical experience of divine life and love, it is immaterial to ask how much comes from God and how much from man. The dualism between jñāna and ajñāna in Advaita is dissolved in Brahmaiñāna; likewise the dualism between karma and kṛpā is not solved, but dissolved in mystic experience.

The mystic experience of Nammāļvār is the fruition of bhakti and prapatti, and is the consummation of Visiṣṭādvaitic experience. The Āļvār is a born mystic and his only hunger and thirst are the hunger and thirst for God. God is infinite love and the Āļvār's longing for God is infinite and bursts the bounds of human personality. The true meaning of the sarīra-sarīrī relation is fully brought out in the Āļvār's organic craving for God. Just as the body cannot live for a moment without the soul, the self cannot live even for a second without the pulsation of the love of God, its sarīrīn. Allured by the bewitching beauty of God, the Āļvār renounces the lusts of the flesh and is consumed by the flaming love

of Kṛṣṇa. The sublimity of his agony of separation in the dark night of the soul is unique even in mystic literature. When the jīva sheds its ahankāra and is purified in the furnace of love, it attains its home in the absolute and is immersed in immortal bliss. The Alvar returns from his blissful state, invites the world to share his joy and says to every one: "Come and see." Though the ardent prapanna is practically a mukta even in the state of embodiment and is free from all karma, he is absolutely purified only when he crosses the ocean of samsāra and reaches the headquarters of reality. It is only when the phenomenal world of space-time and causality and the moral sphere of karma are transcended that there is real mukti or freedom from embodiment. Then the Brahmavit realises the world of Brahman and is immersed in immortal ananda. The goal of Brahmajñāna is Brahmānanda, and it is the most valued of the eternal values of mukti. The mukta regains his unitive-consciousness by renouncing the separatist outlook, and sees everything with the eye of Brahman under the form of eternity in the spaceless space of timeless time. Even the Upanisad fails to describe the nature of this Anandaloka and resorts to poetic metaphor and analogy to express the inexpressible state. The prapanna's uniqueness of being is lost in the universality of divine life and selfless service to the sesī. The Alvārs and the ācāryas who have had a soul sight of Brahman find their supreme joy for ever in serving the Lord in His līlā of love and world redemption.

### SECTION II

Before attempting a critical estimate of Visiṣṭādvaita, it is necessary to examine the main charges levelled against it, in the light of its central features as summarised in the

foregoing section and the more elaborate explanation in the work itself. Every philosophy has to be understood from its highest standpoint and evaluated in terms of the ideals. of immanent criticism gained by such sympathetic insight. The chief points of criticism may be grouped in the order of the methods of study adopted in this work, and answered from the Visistādvaitic standpoint. The first charge relates to the bramana, and is against its acceptance of non-Vedic authority like that of the Pāñcarātra and the Tamil Prabandha, It is met by reminding the critic that in philosophy the value of a truth is more important than its origin and that, even as regards origin, the Pancaratra as the word of God contains the essentials of the Upanisads and the Prabandha as the experience of the seers of God has acquired the status of the Veda 1. The spiritual motive of Visistādvaita is at least as valuable as its epistemology, and it gives in effect a liberal interpretation of the Veda as a body of eternal spiritual truths spiritually verified by rsis and Alvars and verifiable by others. and such a view is worthy more of commendation than of criticism. The second objection is to the Visistādvaitic view of ontology that the sat without a second is saguna Brahman; and what is called nirguna is the negation not of saguna, but of heya guna or evil in the divine nature. The opponents argue that Rāmānuja is only on the logical or theological level and does not rise to the higher level of the intuition of Reality which is more than mere existence. To him the Real is not the real in itself, but the real for thought which is a concrete universal. Isvara, the God of religion is made in the moulds of logic to suit common sense, and suffers from the self-contradictions of the finite-infinite. This is not a single objection

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Even other schools base their authority on overbeliefs in minor *Upanisads* and other sources of knowledge and some of them reject the *Veda* itself if it does not support their main theory.

but a complex question, and suffers from confusion. The philosophy of nirguna Brahman is inconceivable, as nirguna Brahman is a concept and at the same time transcends conceptual life. There is no affinity between the absolute of Hegel and that of Visiṣṭādvaita, as the former is based on dialectics and the latter on sāstraic authority. Besides, every Vedāntin transcends the logical level and relies on intuition, and it is not true to say that Rāmānuja occupies the logical level and S'aṅkara the intuitional. Visiṣṭādvaita as a philosophy of religion identifies the absolute of philosophy with the God of religion and does not accept the theory of two Brahmans.

The charge against its cosmology is that Brahman cannot be the material and efficient cause of the world of citacit in the sarīra-sarīrī relation. If, as the theory says, citacit as the body of God is the material cause and the soul of God is the efficient cause, it is like saying that we take half a fowl for cooking and leave the other half to lay eggs. Here the metaphysical view of "pan-organismal monism" is mistaken for a mathematical one. The creative urge is spatialised and dissected into parts. The critic next asks: "How can the changeless Brahman become the changing universe?" This is the crux of every Vedāntic philosophy, and every school has to rely on sastra as the only authority for its explanation. Rāmānuja, following the Sūtrakāra, says, that Brahman is in the changing world, but is not the changing world, as He is immanent in the logical aspect and eminent in the ethical. Brahman is ever pure and perfect, and the imperfections of life are traceable to the moral freedom of the jīva and the whole process is a līlā of love for making muktas. The critic mistakes cosmology for mythology when he explains the reality of the cosmic process and

purpose in terms of anthropomorphism and the myth-making tendency of man. The remark of the critic that Rāmānuja tells fairy tales and narrates beautiful stories of the other world with the confidence of one who had personally assisted in the origination of the world is not serious and does not call for criticism. The fourth objection is a frontal attack on the key-thought of Brahman as the sarīrin of the world. There is interaction between soul and body and the jīva suffers from the manifold ills of the body. Brahman as the sarīrin of all jīvas who constitute his body should suffer from the ills of the infinite number of jīvas and become a samsārin on a cosmic scale. A true understanding of the sarīra-sarīrī relation in terms of immanence and transcendence will remove this misconception. The infinite enters into the finite as its Self and infinitises its content. The relation expresses in metaphorical language the deep metaphysical and mystic idea of the spiritual intimacy between the atman and Paramatman who descends into the atman and deifies it. The whole S'ārīraka S'āstra will be stultified if logical immanence and spiritual eminence are not vitally related.

The chief difficulty in Visistādvaitic psychology is the apparent contradiction between the finite self and its allpervading attributive consciousness. Rāmānuja explains it by the Sūtra analogy of the lamp and its luminosity. There is the same infinity in the atom as in the stellar space. From the point of view of the ultimate experience of the released self in mukti, it is clear that the mukta like Vāmadeva has the direct intuition of the infinite and also cosmic consciousness. The finite-infinite nature of the self is deduced from this intuition, and this view does full justice to the

pluralistic view of nānā-jīva and the monistic ideal of the unitive consciousness, and is more satisfactory than the solution offered by Advaita to the problem of the existence of a plurality of ivas even after the experience of identity by the first iīvanmukta. The finite-infinite problem is really a stumbling block in every school of philosophy; but Rāmānuja's solution has the advantage of the support of stastra and spiritual experience. He reveals spiritual modesty when he attributes the contradiction to the *iva* and not to Brahman. A more serious difficulty arises from the definition of the jīva as a unique monad or visesva and at the same time as a mode of Brahman or visesana. The jīva has its own nature and moral and spiritual worth; but its individuality is not self-centred and exclusive, as its centre is the self-luminous Brahman. The self exists with the inner Self as its life and light. This view does full justice to theism and pantheism and satisfies the ethical and mystical consciousness.

The ethical problem of Rāmānuja is the dilemma of determinism. The puruṣa is either determined by prakṛti and the guṇas or controlled by the will of God. He is thus caught between the horns of fatalism and divine determinism. This defect is removed by escaping between the horns of the dilemma and pointing to the third alternative, namely, the freedom of the self on the moral level. The self has the will to attain self-sovereignty by overcoming the guṇas, to seek mukti and to attune itself to the will of the supreme Self. The seventh objection is raised against the relation between karma and kṛpā as the two are really self-discrepant. S'rī Vaiṣṇavism, as an ethical religion, recognises the dualism between the two, but calls attention to the reign of the law of love in the domain of religious experience. Godhead is one, but

works in the dual capacity of *Isvara-Isvarī* in the interests of world redemption. *Isvara* is the God of righteousness who is free from arbitrariness and cruelty as He metes out justice to every one according to his *karma* or desert, and is at the same time the Redeemer, as S'rī or Love enthrones Herself in the heart of divine law. Law and love may be analysed logically but cannot really be divided, and it is the supreme merit of S'rī Vaiṣṇavism that it accepts the organic relation between law and love and recognises the reign of love in the supreme realm of religion. *Mukti* is as much a gift as a gain, and it is impossible without the grace of the guru and God or guru and *Isvara prasāda*.

The eighth charge is that Visistādvaita, in its mysticaspect, savours of the evils of sentimentalism and erotism. This criticism was considered at some length in the relevant chapters and traced to misunderstanding. Humanity should not be judged by its aberrations; and every religion has a right to be understood and appreciated in the light of its best exponents and exemplars. Visistādvaitic Vaisnavism defines God as Love and religion as the life of God in the love of man, and insists on the dual discipline of thought and feeling in its scheme of devotion as bhaktirūpāpannajñāna or matinalam as Nammāļvār calls it. The Gītā defines the true devotee as jīnānī because he knows that God alone sustains him as his sarīrin, and loves Him for love's sake without any fear or love of gain; but such love cannot be called intellectual love, as the Lord of love seeks the jñānī as his sarīrin and is sustained by such love. Love is reciprocal, but it is a unitive experience; and the rāsa līlā is a sublime expression of the līlā of love and it is only the pure in heart who are free from sexuality even in thought that can have a glimpse of its beatitude.

The ninth is the familiar criticism that Rāmānuja's world of mukti or Paramapada is anthropomorphic and is a glorious picture of an earthly paradise in which the Vaisnavites enjoy all the pleasures of the senses and call it the bliss of Vaikuntha. Amidst the delights of sparkling rivers, trees laden with delicious fruits, gentle breezes and golden sunshine, they drink and dance, sing and feast and sometimes hold philosophic converse with one another. But this criticism is more a satire than a sympathetic view, and applies not to Rāmānuja's, picture but to the Kausītaki Upanisad on which it is based. Rāmānuja insists on viveka and vairāgya as essential steps to mukti, and describes it as a world beyond space and time and a state which only the purified and perfected mukta can enjoy. The Upanisad employs poetic or allegoric language to describe the infinite beyond the senses; but the critic mistakes it for the infinite in the senses by a process of adhyāsa. The Upanisad refers to Brahma-gandha, Brahma-rūba, Brahma-rasa and Brahmaānanda in terms of Brahmānubhava; but the whole sense is destroyed if the stress is on gandha, rūpa and rasa and not on Brahman. In the unitive experience of Brahman in the world of ananda, the seer transcends the barriers of divided life and his thought expires in enjoyment.

The tenth and last objection is directed against the philosophy as a whole. As a system of theistic monism which tries to mediate between theism and monism, it shares the defects of both without having their advantages and falls between two stools. As a philosophy of religion it is not consistent with itself, as in theory it is non-dualistic and in practice theistic. Though it combats the schools of Bhedābheda, it does not radically differ from them in its

attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable elements of bheda and abheda, and is often identified with them. The main point in all these objections is the criticism not of Visiṣṭādvaita but of synthetic philosophy itself; and it is well-known that the philosophers who hold extreme views do not like to meet, and mistake synthesis for compromise or eclecticism. But Visiṣṭādvaita is as hostile to Bhedābheda as Advaita, owing to the absurdity of the Bhedābheda assertion of the co-existence of contradictories, and its great defect in the predication of evil to the divine nature. The most inspiring truth of Visiṣṭādvaita is its definition of God as love. Love mediates between thought and will by inspiring the former and illumining the latter, and, guided by love, the pluralist and the monist gohand in hand without being at arm's length.

#### SECTION III

Visistādvaita as S'ārīraka S'āstra is entirely different from other systems of Indian philosophy, āstika and nāstika, and it has its own peculiar meaning and value. As a matter of fact, every system of Indian philosophy has a distinct individuality of its own, due probably to its insistence on a clear and distinct knowledge of the pramāṇas as a preliminary to philosophical enquiry and the formation of the intellectual habit of definiteness in polemic warfare. Visiṣṭādvaita is different from Dvaita in spite of the affinities between the two systems caused by their opposition to Advaita. The ideas of Ubhaya Vedānta, immanent causality, apṛthaksiddha visieṣaṇa and the similarity of all muktas in the unitive experience of the bliss of Brahman are peculiar to Visiṣṭādvaita, and do not meet with the approval of the Dvaitavādin. Visiṣṭādvaita is opposed to the Advaita theory of Māyāvāda and identity

philosophy, as it affirms the reality of jagat and recognises only visista aikya and not svarūpa aikya. It is entirely opposed to every school of Bhedābheda, as the latter predicates imperfections to Brahman. Rāmānuja's exposition of the Sūtras is different from that of S'rīkantha and S'rīkara in spite of their many common philosophical ideas, as Rāmānuja denies supremacy to S'iva and the theory of causality which makes S'iva the efficient cause of the world. But, owing to its allcomprehensive character, Visistādvaita accepts whatever is coherent with its unity in other systems, though it gives a new meaning to them. It has no objection to the Nyāya theory of the pramanas, the satkaryavada and the psychology of the Sānkhyas and the yōgic discipline and the primacy given tomorals by the Mīmāmsaka, as they fit into its system, though their meaning is transfigured. The system of Rāmānuja has much in common with the Vaisnavite teachings of Caitanya and Vallabha who followed him, but it does not approve of the Acintya Bhedābhedavāda of Caitanya and the S'uddhādvaita of Vallabha. Thus from the point of view of siddhanta, Visistādvaita has a continuous tradition through the ages and has its peculiar meaning and value in the history of Indian philosophy.

Philosophy is a persistent enquiry into the nature of Reality in its threefold aspects of nature, self and God or acit, cit and Īsvara, and different systems of thought were deduced by possible combinations of the three tatvas. Phenomenalism denies the noumenal reality of the tatvas and lapses into nihilism like that of Buddhism. The concept of Reality as either matter, self or God has given rise to the three monistic schools of materialism, the subjectivism of the Ekajīva-vāda and the identity philosophy of nirguṇa Brahman. The

combinations of two tatvas lead to the formulation of the Jaina and Sānkhyan systems and the schools of personalism. The Vaiseṣika and the schools of Vedānta including practical Advaita recognise the existence of all the three tatvas. But it is Visiṣṭādvaita that brings out the integral and organic unity of the tatvas.

The Vedāntic systems, Dvaita, Advaita and Visistādvaita, are often identified with the western systems of theism, monism and pantheism, though the points of resemblance are not essential. As the western views overlap, blur distinctiveness and have not the well-defined character of Vedānta, there is no basis for comparison and the establishment of affinities. For example, all Vedāntic schools, unlike the western varieties, have faith in the co-ordination of the pramanas including the Veda, the theory of manas as an internal sense organ evolved from brakrti, the existence of the eternal ātman, the moral order of karma and the spiritual realisation of mukti. Theism is often defined as faith in an extra-cosmic God who creates souls by the mere fiat of His will, saves the believer and the elect and rejects the unbeliever. In its modern form, it is deeply influenced by pantheism. But Dvaita insists on eternal relations and eternal differences between Isvara, cit and acit, defines Isvara as the self-dependent and supreme Ruler of the universe, and the jīva as eternally dependent on His will, and assures mukti to the sātvika jīva. Pantheism affirms that God is all or all is God. It may connote pancosmism, acosmism, neo-Platonism or even panlogism. Visistādvaita is not pantheistic in any of these senses, as it defines Brahman as the Self that is in all beings and beyond them. Monism as absolute idealism affirms the unity of all beings by denying pluralism and theism, but it may mean the monism of Parmenides, Spinoza or Bradley. But Advaita is different from the western theories, as it affirms the identity of jīva and Īsvara as experienced in jīvanmukti. This study of contrasts does not minimise the value of comparative study and of the synthetic method of stressing the points of convergence. But before the method is attempted, it is essential to know that the terms matter, soul, self or spirit and God, as employed in western thought, are different from the terms prakṛti, ātman and Brahman used in Vedānta.

The fundamental difference in the two ways of approach lies in the Vedāntic conception that the metaphysical problem is really the right understanding by the mumuksu of the relation between the ātman and Brahman by viveka and vairāgya. While western theism, monism and pantheism are mainly interested in ascertaining the nature of God in His relation to the universe, the Vedāntic schools seek to discover the spiritual basis of nature and the exact status of the atman in the realisation of Brahman. It is profitless for a man to know the universe in its immensity and conquer its secrets without knowing his own soul and its divine foundations. The Vedāntin is not satisfied with the knowledge of the external world and the pleasures of life here and in Svarga, but seeks the light of Brahmajñāna and eternal life. By realising Brahman as the unity of the whole universe, the universe is known; but by knowing the universe we cannot know Brahman. While western thought is an outlook, Vedānta is an insight into the nature of the inner self. This is well brought out in the classic instance of S'vetaketu whose pride that he knew all things was humbled by his father when he reminded the son that he had not the wisdom of Brahmajñāna, in the sorrow of Nārada who knew all sciences but was not aware of Brahman which alone gives bliss, in the quest of Naciketas for eternal life beyond the historic successions of births and deaths, in the longing of Maitreyī for infinite life and love, and in the cosmic intuition of Prahlāda which he communicated to his father that everything in the cosmos was big with Brahman. Knowledge is an ocean and the mumukṣu should seek only what is relevant to his spiritual needs. Man has to dive into divinity and be merged in its immortal bliss.

God is the centre of the universe, and the philosopher who tries to understand the universe without knowing God simply goes round the circumference and never even comes near the centre. The more the scientist-philosopher seeks to unravel the mystery of nature, the more veils are left behind. ance increases with knowledge and the riddle of the sphynx remains unsolved. The question of the evolution of the universe is wrapped in mystery and wonder and the theories of Māyāvāda, Brahmaparināmavāda and the origin of evil are admissions of the failure of the logical intellect to probe into the ultimate meaning of the universe of space-time. vision of the cosmos divinely bestowed on Arjuna filled him with awe, and in utter humility he implored the cosmic Ruler to reveal His true nature as his eternal Friend and Saviour. The metaphysician who seeks to scan the starry heavens and to know the infinite stretch of space and time is perplexed by its increasing mystery and turns sceptic. But, if he becomes a mystic who seeks Brahman, he becomes a seer of Brahman. By knowing God everything else is revealed, and it is this truth that is revealed by the terms Advaita, Dvaita and Visistādvaita. It is enshrined in the text "Thou art That", and it sums up the wisdom of the Upanisads and brings out their immortal glory.

The term 'That' refers to Brahman and the term 'thou' to the ātman, and it is the supreme problem of Vedānta to find out the exact connection between the two, known as the jīvātman and Paramātman. All the varieties of Vedāntic experience are ultimately based on the knowledge of the text which is extolled by Advaita as the Mahāvākya. S'ankara explains it as the knowledge of the absolute identity or aikva between the jīva and Īsvara by the elimination or sublation of the apparent self-contradictions contained in the relation between the two, due to nescience in its subjective and objective aspects of avidyā and māyā. Dvaita revolts against this irreverence, as religion is rooted in the worship of *Isvara* as the creator of the universe, and absolutely different from the jīva or the creature which for ever depends on Isvara's will. By applying the rules of grammar, logic and Mīmāmsā, it reads the text as "Thou art not That," and then it means "thou art His (tasya) as His dasa". The schools of Bhedabheda claim to do equal justice to the aspects of abheda and bheda and interpret the Upanisad in the light of bhedābheda. To Bhāskara the judgment means mystic union or ekībhāva in which the jīva merges into Brahman like a river losing itself in the ocean. Yādava, however, thinks that it includes difference as well as identity. To Caitanya it reveals the relation between the lover and the beloved in terms of acintya bhedābheda. Vallabha thinks that Tat is tasmat or That from which the jiva emanates and that on the mystic side it is the ecstasy of love. S'rīkantha says that 'That' is S'iva and 'thou' is the jīva and the two become one in mukti. Rāmānuja expounds it as the relation of sarīra and sarīrin and affirms that Brahman, the cosmic ground, is the inner self of the jīva as its s'arīrin. His interpretation reveals the meaning of the text in the light of the illustrations employed in the Upanisad.

fits in with the context and satisfies the ends of synthetic philosophy.

In a sense every Vedāntic system has a synthetic purpose, as it claims to be a criticism and a fulfilment of the previous systems. Each is a chronological and logical transition from its precursor, satisfies a specific historic need and is pragmatically justified. Every school seeks to satisfy the triple tests of sruti, vukti and anubhava and the three prasthanas. The Advaita of S'ankara avoids the extremes of the nihilism of Nāgārjuna and the theism of the Naiyāyika and claims to harmonise the six religions which were popular at the time. It deduces the theory of Māyā from the experience of Advaita. Bhāskara re-interprets S'ankara by his theory of upādhis as the real and not fictitious limiting adjuncts of saguna Brahman, who is perfect but is at the same time formless, and by his theory of ekībhāva in the place of aikya jñāna. Yādava substitutes Brahmapariņāma for upādhis and thinks of Brahman as the perfect Self with a form of His own and mukti as a bhedābheda relation between the jīva and Brahman. Nimbārka posits an immanent sakti in Brahman and largely follows Rāmānuja's idea of God. Rāmānuja's theory of Brahman seeks to avoid the extremes of bhedābheda and naive theism. Pūrņaprajña brings out the theistic implications of Vedanta by defining Brahman as omnipotent and omniscient and as the operative cause of the world, the jīva as a visesa and not a visesana and mukti as the graded enjoyment of the bliss of Brahman as His eternal dasa. Caitanya gives a mystic version of theism by defining God as love in terms of the Acintya Bhedhābheda relation with the devotee. Vallabha stresses the non-dual aspect of theism by his theory of S'uddhādvaita in which he refers to emanation and

ecstasy. In this way every *Vedāntic* school claims to synthesise extreme views and present a coherent view of nature, self and God.

On the whole it is Visistādvaita as S'ārīraka S'āstra that presents a synthetic view, par excellence, of Vedanta, because it is its avowed aim to harmonise the seeming contradictions of the S'ruti in the light of the Ghataka S'rutis by employing the samanvaya method, and it is the supreme merit of the Bhāsyakāra to wind up the discussion with a note of harmony in the highest sense of the term "Thus everything is satisfactorily explained (iti sarvam samañjasam)." It is the only philosophy of religion that affirms the self-identity of Brahman as the metaphysical, ethical and intuitional highest, and it interprets every adhikarana in the first two chapters of the Brahma Sūtras as the establishment of Brahman as the supreme tattva for the purpose of experiencing Him as the supreme end or burusārtha. It is a spiritual syllogism in which the spiritual attainment of Brahman follows from philosophic knowledge. The theory of the jīva as the sarīra of Brahman as defined by Rāmānuja fits in with the grammatical rule of sāmānādhikaranya, the logical principle of aprthaksiddha visesana, the metaphysical view of amsa, the cosmological idea of the upādeya as non-different from the upādāna kāraņa and the ethico-religious truths of karma and krpā. The nirguna texts in the Upanisad do not deny guna but only heya guna or the existence of imperfection in the divine nature. The abhēda texts do not deny the plurality of things but deny only the pluralistic view of Reality. The bheda texts affirm the existence of eternal entities but deny their externality to Brahman. The Kārana S'rutis deny the Naivāvika and the Sānkhyan views but affirm the immanence of Brahman and His transcendental eminence. The S'rutis that define the nature of Brahman (svarūpa nirūpaka dharma) affirm self-determination and deny external determination. Bare denial is nothingness or vacuity and denial and affirmation imply each other, and negation is on a par with affirmation. Aikva S'rutis affirm vis'ista aikva and deny svarūba aikya; they deny identity and affirm non-division. In this way, all the conflicting Upanisadic texts and the aching problems of philosophy are solved by the comprehensive idea that Brahman is the sarīrin of all. S'rīkantha presents a S'aivite version of Visistadvaita and leans towards nondualism. Love heals all discords and differences. Even from the point of view of valuation, the synoptic view holds good, because the values of truth, goodness and beauty which are realised by the mukta are conserved in the world of Brahman who is ever true, good, beautiful and perfect. The philosophy of love mediates between the metaphysics of Advaita and the ethics of Dvaita. It transforms Madhusūdhana Sarasvati. the monistic thinker, into a mystic drawn by the alluring beauty of Kṛṣṇa-prema and Caitanya, the subtle logician, into a God-intoxicated lover.

The claim of *Vedānta* to universality rests on the liberal interpretation of its essentials and the emphasis on the points of agreement and not on those of divergence, and *Visiṣṭādvaita* offers a basis for such rapprochement. On the analogy of the Kantian distinction between pure reason and practical reason and the mathematical and ethical methods of Spinoza, difference can be drawn between the pure *Advaita* of the *Māyāvādin* which employs the principle of *adhyāsa* and sublation in establishing the philosophy of identity and the practical

Advaita of the Brahmavādin, which accepts the reality of the world and the unitive consciousness by moral and spiritual discipline. Practical Advaita should accept the identity of the absolute of philosophy and the God of religion, the coordination of jñāna and bhakti as means to mukti and the need for the grace of God and the guru in the attainment of mukti. S'ankara the practical Vedāntin, who accepts the Bhāgavata way of devotion and worships Govindal and works for world welfare, is more helpful to humanity than S'ankara the dialectician, who destroys the world with the all-devouring weapon of sublation. The pure Visistādvaitin as a theistic monist and mystic has to accept the non-dualistic implications of the aprthaksiddha viseşana, visista aikya, non-difference in the causal relation, and avibhaga, and thus practically recognise the points of rapprochement between his system and that of Advaita in the vyāvahārika state, which alone provides a basis for inter-Vedāntic understanding. What is beyond Veda and thought is beyond experience and is not a subject of enquiry. Dvaita rightly stresses the eternal distinction between Brahman, the jīva and the universe and the way of bhakti to mukti; but it does not bring out the omnipotence of love and the loss not of, but in, personality which the mystic experiences in the ecstasy of communion. There is no sinner as such in the religion of love, and sin destroys itself by contacting divine love. The theory of Brahman as the All-Self or startin of all beings who is immanent in all jīvas and in all religions with a view to brahmanising the self furnishes the most inspiring motive for spirituality and service. All philosophies and religions meet in Vedanta and work hand in hand for the uplift of humanity

¹ nārāyaņa karuņāmaya s'araņam karavāņi tāvakau caraņau l iti satpadī madiēye vadanasaroje sadā vasatu II—S'ankara's \$atpadi.

and the establishment of the spiritual kinship of all jīvas including the sub-human species. The Vedāntin is not a conservative that adores the past nor a progressivist that looks forward, but is a religious philosopher who seeks the Eternal One in and beyond the temporal, sees Him directly and works for universal salvation. Even the lowest of the low and the worst sinner can attain God if he but trusts Him. Visiṣṭādvaita with its innate genius for God invites humanity to share in its spiritual hospitality and see Him in all beings and in all sects. The Gītā as the quintessence of Vedāntic wisdom brings out this inspiring message in the immortal words of Bhagavān "Whoever with true devotion worships any deity, in him I deepen that devotion and he ultimately reaches me" and "Even those who worship other divinities worship me."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> yō yō yām yām tanum bhaktah s'raddhayār-gitum iccati l tasya tasyācalām s'raddhām tām eva vidadhāmyaham ll—B.G., VII. 21.

yepyanyadevatābhaktāh yajante s'raddhayānvitāh l tapi māmeva kaunteya yajantyavidhipūrvakam ll—B.G., IX. 23.

# SANSKRIT GLOSSARY

### A

abhāva: non-existence
abheda: non-difference

abhigamana: morning worship

abhimāna: attachment abhivyakta: manifested abhyāsa: repetition ācārya: preceptor acetana: non-sentient

acintya: inconceivable

acit: see acetana

ādhāra: sustainer; support ādheya: the supported

adhiṣṭhāna: substratum; body; the basis for mistaking the

real for the unreal as in the shell-silver example

adhyāsa: super-imposition as in perceiving a rope as a snake adṛṣṭa: unseen effect of one's actions caused by karma in the person who does it

Advaita: non-dualism

advitīya: without a second āgama: religious treatise

aham: I; ego

ahankāra: egoism; the spurious ego of matter; a stage of prakṛti in its evolution

aikya: identity
aisvarya: lordship

ajada: not jada, immaterial

ajātavāda: the Advaitic view that māyā is non-existent

ajñāna: ignorance

ākās'a: ether

akṣara: imperishable

amala: pure

amṛta: immortal

ams'a: part or element of the ams'in

amsin: one with amsias

ānanda: bliss

ānandamaya: blissful

ananta: infinite

ananyārha-seṣatva: absolute serviceability to one only

anavasthā: infinite regress

anga: limb; what stands in a subsidiary relation to the

principal

anirvacanīya: inexplicable annamaya: consisting of food

anṛta: false

antalikarana: inner organ, mind antalipravesa: entering into antaryāmin: the immanent one

aņu: atom or monad anubhava: experience anumāna: inference

anupalabdhi: non-cognition of a thing when the conditions

for cognition are available

anupapatti: impropriety

apaccheda nyāya: a rule in the Pūrva Mīmāmsā

apahatapāpmatva: purity

aparōkṣa: immediate; direct apavarga: release from samsāra

aprākṛta: matter without its mutability

apṛthaksiddha vis'eṣaṇa: inseparable attribute

apūrva: an unseen and blind agency that rewards and punishes

merit and demerit abūrvatva: novelty

arcā: permanent incarnation of God arcirādimārga: the solar path (to mōkṣa)

ārjava: straight-forwardness
arthāpatti: presumption

arthavāda: glorificatory passage, not to be taken literally

arthapañcaka: the five truths
asat: the changeable, i.e., matter

asatkhyāti: the theory that the void is knowable

asatkāryavāda: the theory that the effect, once non-existent,

comes into being afterwards

āsraya: locus
aṣṭānga: eightfold
āstika: believer
asura: demon
āsuric: demoniac

ātmabhāva: the nature of the ātman

ātmaikāsrayatva: dependent entirely on the Self

ātmaikaprakāratva: deriving its modal existence from the Self ātmaikaprayōjanatva: entirely subserving the needs of the Self

ātmajñāna: knowledge of the self

ātman: self; soul

ātmānubhava: experience of the self

avatāra: incarnation avibhāga: inseparability

avidvān: one who is not a vidvān

avidyā: ignorance; an inner obscuring something or nescience which conceals the self-identity of Brahman, according to Advaita

avijnātā: one who does not know

avyakta: unmanifest

B

baddha: the bound (soul in samsāra)bādhita: contradicted: sublated

bala: strength

bhāgavata: devotee of God

bhāgavata-kainkarya: service to the devotees of God

bhakti: devotion to God

bhaktirūpāpannajñāna: intellectual intuition or love of God;
jñāna turned into bhakti

bhāva: feeling
bheda: difference

bhedābheda: identity in difference

bhōgya: object of experience or enjoyment

bhrama: error

Bhuvana sundara: God as Cosmic Beauty Brahmajñāna: realisation of Brahman

Brahman: the Absolute of philosophy that is also the god

of religion

Brahmaparināmavāda: the theory that the Absolute trans-

forms itself as the world Brahmārþaṇa: offering to God

buddhi: intellect

C

caitanya: intelligence carama-s'lōka: last verse

cetana : sentient
cit : sentient being

D

dama: control of the senses

dambha: ostentation

darpa: pride

dars'ana: system of philosophy leading to the direct know-

ledge of Reality

dāsa: servant; one who freely dedicates oneself to the services

of God and godly men

dāsya: serviceability

dayā: mercy

dehātmabhāva: imagining the body to constitute one's self

dhāraka: sustenance; supporter

dharma: attribute; duty

dharmabūtajñāna: attributive intelligence distinguished from

substantive intelligence

dharmin: possessor of dharma or attribute

dhyāna: meditation

dhyāna-niyoga-vādin: one who holds that dhyāna is a pre-

scribed discipline to attain Brahmajñāna

Divya-Prabandha: The sacred Tamil hymns of the Alvars

dravya: substance

dvandva: pair (of opposites)

dveșa: hatred

E

ekajīva: a single self

ekajīvavāda: the theory that there is only one jīva or soul

G

ghațaka S'ruti: mediating text, e.g., Bṛ. Up., III. vii. 7 et seq

guru: spiritual teacher

guru paramparā: line of gurus

H

hita: means (to the chief end, Self-realisation)

I

ijyā: the principal worship at midday as ordained in the

indriyas: senses (cognitive and conative)

Iswara: God; the inner controller of all beings

J

jada: inert: matter
jagat: the cosmic order

jahadajahal-lakṣaṇā: the principle in Advaita of affirming the identity of jīva and Īsvara by eliminating their differences

jīva: individual soul that has cognition, conation and feeling
 jīvanmukti: mukti realised in life; freedom in embodiment

jñāna: knowledge

jñāna-karma-samuccaya: the co-ordination of knowledge and action

jñānāsraya: locus of jñāna

jñātrtva: the state of being the subject of knowledge or knower

jyōtiṣām jyōtis: light of lights

K

kainkarya: consecrated service

kaivalya: self-realisation

kalyāna guņa: auspicious quality

kāma: desire

kāmya-karma: action prompted by desire

karma: action; the result on the self of its previous actions

kārya Brahman: effected Brahman kartrtva: responsibility for action

kinkara: servant
kīrtana: singing

krama-mukti: progressive ascent to the realm of the supreme

krōdha: anger
krþā: mercy

kṣaṇika-vijñāna: momentariness of cognition

kṣetra: the body as the field where one reaps the result of

past karma

kṣetrajña: the knower of the body, i.e., the soul

kṣīrābdhi: ocean of Milk

L

laksana: definition

lakṣaṇā: secondary import linga-sarīra: subtle body

 $l\bar{\imath}l\bar{a}$ : sport  $l\bar{\upsilon}ka$ : world

M

Mahāvākya: the supreme Upaniṣadic texts (dealing with Brahmajñāna according to the Advaitin)

manana: reflection

manas: mind

manomaya: mind-made; mental

mantra: incantation

māyā: cosmic illusion or nescience

māyāvāda: the theory that everything except Brahman is illusory or phenomenal

māyin: creator of māyā; illusionist

Mīmāmsā: Interpretation of Vedic injunctions

mōkṣa: release from samsāra or bondage due to karma

mukta: released soul

mukti: release (from the round of births and deaths)
mūla-prakrti: primordial matter or cosmic stuff

mūlāvidyā: primordial nescience

mumuksu: one desiring release; the seeker after salvation

#### N

nāma: name or form

nara: man

nāstika: unbeliever, athiest

neti: not thus

nididhyāsana: steady meditation nimitta-kārana: efficient cause

niravayava: incapable of physical division; partless

nirguna: without qualities—indeterminate nirguna Brahman: Indeterminate Brahman

nirhetuka-kaṭākṣa: unconditioned (or operative) grace

nirupādhika: unconditioned nirveda: regret and repentence

nirvikalpaka pratyakṣa: indeterminate perception or cognition

of the object for the first time

nirviseșa: attributeless nirvikāra: immutable

niṣkāma-karma: disinterested action

nisprapañca-niyōga-vāda: the theory that regards mukti as

cosmic dissolution

nitya-sūri: the eternally free

niyamena prakāra: invariable mode

niyantā: ruler; controller

 $niy\bar{o}ga$ : injunction: unseen result produced by carrying out a

Vedic injunction

P

Pāñcarātra: certain scriptures accepted by S'rī Vaiṣṇavas, as

revealed by Nārāyaṇa

pañcīkaraṇa: quintuplication: the theory that holds that every physical object contains all the five bhūtas

pāpa: sin para: great

barama: supreme

paramapada; the supreme abode of Brahman

Paramātman: Supreme Self

pāratantrya: dependence on God pariņāma: change; transformation

parināma-vāda: See Brahmaparināma-vāda

parōkṣa : mediate
prācurya : abundance

pradhāna: primal nature; see also prakṛti
prakāra: mode; the jīva as a mode of God

prakārin: the substance which has modes; Brahman

prakṛti: nature; a modification of matter: also called pradhāna pralaya: unmanifested condition of the universe; dissolution

of the universe

pramāṇas: sources of valid knowledge; authorities

prāṇāyāma: control of the vital airs
prāpaka: one who leads to the prāpya

prapanna: one who has surrendered his self to God

prapatti: self-surrender to God

prāpti: attainment

prāpya: end to be attained

prārabdha-karma: previous deeds that have begun to produce
their moral results; karma that has begun to bear fruit

prārthanā: prayer

pratyaksa: evidence of the senses or sense-perception

pratyaktva: self-awareness

premā: deep love

punya: an act of religious merit leading to svarga

purusa: person; self

Puruṣōttama: the supreme self

puruṣārtha: ends of human endeavour

Pūrvapakṣa: prima facie view

R

rāga: desire

Rakṣaka: Redeemer

rajas: the quality of prakṛti producing restless activity

rasa: aesthetic taste; deliciousness rathī: the master in the chariot

ṛṣi: seer; sage
ruci: taste
rūþa: form

S

sabda: verbal testimony; scriptural authority

sādhana: a course of religious discipline

sādhyōpāya: the means to mōkṣa which has to be effected by the aspirant

saguna: possessing attributes

sākṣin: witness sakti: power

samādhi: deep contemplation or introversion

sāmānādhikaranya: syntactic equation of terms denoting the same thing, but connoting different attributes; grammatical apposition

samanvaya: method of reconciliation

samavāya: inherence, a category of the Vaiseșikas

samaṣṭi: aggregate sambandha: relation

samsāra: empirical life including the cycle of births and deaths;

bondage sams'aya: doubt sams'lesa: union

s'ama: control of mind

sañcita-karma: past action that has not yet commenced to

fructify
sankalþa: will

sankalpāsraya: dependent on the will of God

sankōca: contraction sannyāsa: renunciation

saptavidhānupapatti: seven-fold objections raised by Rāmā-

nuja against the Advaitin's theory of avidyā

sarīra: body

s'arīrin: the owner of the body

sarīra-sarīri sambandha: the relation between body and soul; between the finite self and the Absolute as expounded by Rāmānuja

sat: being; a sentient being different from asat or material object

satkārya vāda: the view that the effect is pre-existent as cause and not non-existent

satkhyāti: realism

satyakāma: self-fulfilled desire

satyasya satyam: Real of reals; real Reality; the True of the true

sattva: the quality of prakrti leading to happiness and harmony

savikalpaka-jñāna: determinate knowledge

saviseșa: determinate; with qualities

saviseṣaṇa-jñāna: determinate knowledge; apprehension of the new object in the light of the old

s'eṣa: one who exists for the purpose of the s'eṣin, or one who is in tune with the will of God

s'eșin: one who utilises the s'eșa for His purpose

siddhānta: the final view

siddhōpāya: the means to mōkṣa which is self-accom-

plished, i.e., God

sivam: auspicious skandha: aggregate

smarana: remembering

sravaṇa: hearing
sṛṣṭi: creation
sṛuti: the Veda
suddha: pure

sundara: beautiful

s'ūnya: non-existent, like the sky-flower; bare negation

s'ūnyavāda: theory of nihilism

svabhāva vāda: theory of naturalism

svadharma: one's own duty (based on birth and station in life)

svādhyāya: study of the Veda

svāmin: master

Svarga: the world of celestial pleasures as a reward for good deeds here

svarūþa: essential nature

svarūpaikya: absolute identity

svarūpa nirūpaka dharma: determining attributes

svayam jyōtis: self-effulgent

## T

tamas: the quality of prakṛti resulting in indolence and inertia

tanmātra: subtle element tattva: truth; reality

tattva-traya: the three categories or ultimate factors of real-

ity: matter, spirit and God

tejas: energy

## U

ubhaya-linga: with two signs (a topic in the Vedānta Sūtras dealing with the two-fold nature of Brahman as perfect and free from imperfections)

upādāna: collecting materials (for worship of God) upādāna-kāraņa: material or immanent cause upādhis: limiting adjuncts, real or fictitious

upakrama: the beginning of a topic

upamāna: comparison
upapatti: fitness, propriety

upāsaka: aspirant

upasamhāra: termination upāya: means to an end upeya: end to be attained

utkramana: ascent from the body (of the atman)

utkrānti: see utkramaņa

# V

vāda: argument; theory

vaikuntha: the world of Brahman

vairāgya: freedom from the desires of sensibility; abandon-

ment of worldly desires

varņāsrama-dharma: duties based on birth and station in life

vedana: knowledge or loving meditation or bhakti

vibhu: pervasive vicāra: enquiry

vicchinna: limited

vidheyatva: the quality of being controlled vidvān: the wise man who knows Brahman

vijñāna: knowledge

vijñānamaya: the knowing self

vikāra: modificationvikāsa: expansion

viparyaya: wrong notion

vipralambha: separation from the beloved one

virākti: see vairāgya virādhi: obstacle vīrva: heroism

vis'eṣaṇa: an attribute of an object vis'eṣva: possessed of attributes

vis'leşa: separation vis'ista: with attributes

Visiṣṭādvaita: the theory of the Absolute as Brahman the sarīrin with the universe as sarīra; pan-organismal

monism

visistaikyam: unity in the form of an organic whole involving several attributes

visvarūpa-darsana: the cosmic form of God revealed to Arjuna on the field of Kurukṣetra

vyāja: occasion

vyāvahārika-satya: phenomenal or relative reality

## Y

yajña: worship

yathārtha: corresponding to fact

yathārtha-khyāti: the theory that all knowledge is real

yōgin: One who intuits Reality

yukti: Argumentation

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Bhanga; (6) Rahasyas; (7) Rahasyatrayasāra; (8)

Sankalpa Sūryōdaya; (9) S'atadūṣaṇī

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# ERRATA

[N.B.—The following list consists of only such corrections as are important. Minor corrections which the reader can correct for himself are omitted.]

PAGE	LINE	READ
10	31 etc.	skandhas
11	15 etc.	adhikārin
38	33	padayōḥ
46	31	s'abda
47	8	circular reasoning
55	27 etc.	adhiṣṭhāna
56	20	mūlā
		tūlā
5 <i>7</i>	15	nivṛttyanupapatti
59	26 etc.	s⁄āstra
	30	yathārtha
63	32	apaccheda
79	18 etc.	sadbhāva
87	3	brahmaņatvāt
95	18 etc.	sarīrin
	<b>2</b> 4	for 'and linguistics 'read 'linguistics'
96	30	lakṣaṇā
107	16	tuccha
154	27 etc.	tripādasya
155	28 etc.	ōdanaḥ

PAGE	LINE	READ
164	22	saumya
186	31	omit "Spinoza"
214	36	uparisṭāt
236	29	ya ãtmani
238	30	lakşana
339	28	or practice of introversion
363	13	avicchinna
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393	3 & 8	svarūpasamarpaņa
477	6	s⁄ākta
484	13 etc.	Audulōmi
494	33	ijnāna
505	27	Pei
508	4	Periyāļvār Tirumoļi
509	18	samsāra
512	22	Dramiḍa
514	31	¹ Gambhīrā
534	34	nyāsāṅga

In the case of the following words, the diacritical marks should be as below wherever they occur

ahimsā; bhōktā; dehī; dharmī; guņī; jijñāsā; mīmāmsā; sākṣin; Saṭhakōpa; sattva; s'eṣī; sphōṭa; sṛṣṭi; tattva; upāsanā.

Abbreviations: A = Advaita; BB = Bhedabheda; Bh = Bhaskara; D=Dvaita; M=Madhya; R=Rāmānuja; S=S'ankara; V = Vis'istādvaita; accg. to =according to

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

Bhagavad Gītā B. G. Br. Up. Brhadāraņyakopanisad Ch. Up. Chāndōgya Upaniṣad Ch. Upan. Kath. Up. Kathopanişad Kauşī. Up. Kauşītaki Upanişad Mund. Up. Mundakopanisad Pr. Up. Pras'nopanisad S'ārīraka Sūtras S. S. S. B. S'rī Bhāsya S. B. E. Sacred Books of the East Sv. Up. S'vētās vatara Upanisad Svet. Up. Taitt. Up. Taittirīyopanisad Taitt. Tiruvāimoli Tiru. Visnu Purāņa V.P. V.S. Vedānta Sūtras Ve. Su. Y. M. D. Yatīndramatadīpikā Y. D.

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